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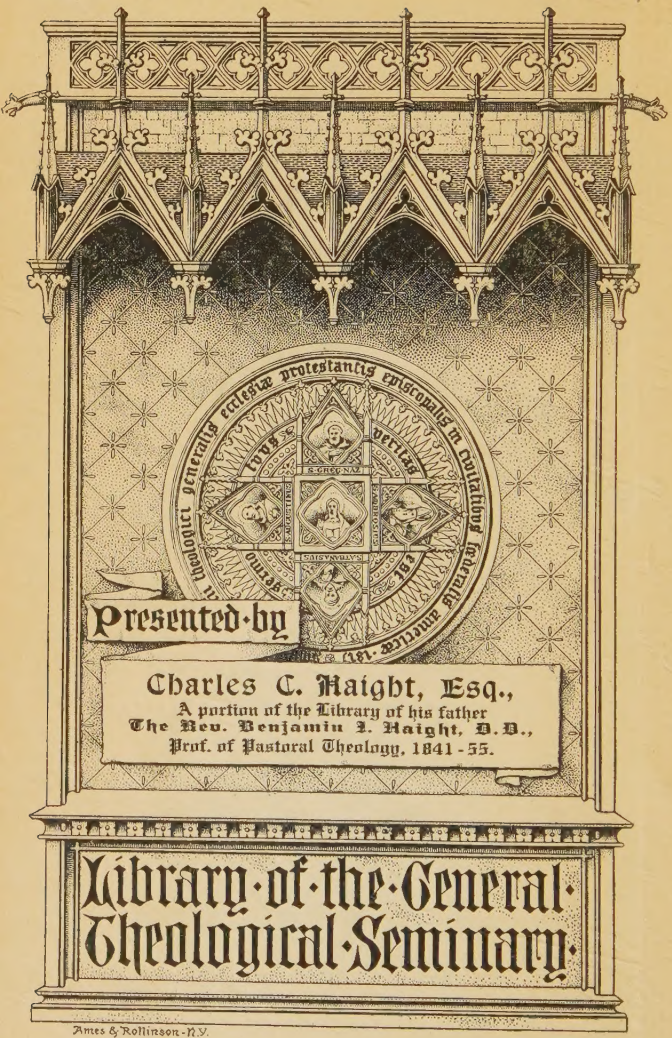
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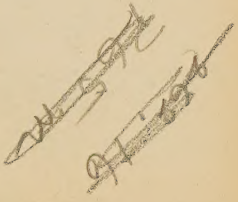

Devotional exercises

MEDITATIONS

AND

PRAYERS

ON THE

ORDINATION SERVICE

FOR PRIESTS.

BY THE

REV. JOHN H. PINDER, M.A.

PRINCIPAL OF THE WELLS THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE,

AND CANON OF WELLS CATHEDRAL.

Καὶ χάριν ἔχω τῷ ἐνδυναμώσαντί με Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ Κυρίῳ ἡμῶν, ὅτι πιστόν με ἡγήσατο, θέμενος εἰς διακονίαν.

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TO

MY YOUNGER BRETHREN,

WHO HAVE FORMERLY GIRDED THEMSELVES FOR THE

WORK OF THE MINISTRY,

At the Wells Theological College,

AS WELL AS TO THOSE WHO ARE NOW MEMBERS

OF THAT INSTITUTION,

THIS MANUAL IS INSCRIBED,

WITH PRAYER TO GOD FOR HIS BLESSING THEREON,

IN CHRIST,

BY THEIR AFFECTIONATE FRIEND,

J. H. P.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR,

MEDITATIONS AND PRAYERS

ON THE

ORDINATION SERVICE

FOR

DEACONS.

PREFACE.

THE Author of the following Meditations and Prayers has often heard the earnest wish expressed by Candidates for Holy Orders, that an interval was provided between the Bishop's examination, and the solemn hour of receiving their Ministerial Commission from above. A devout desire has been felt, that, released from the fear of rejection, and from the labour of composition, and effort of memory, incident to that trial, the spirit might uninterruptedly gird itself in a special course of penitential reflection, prayer, and sacred resolution, for the work about to be undertaken. How far such a change in the system of Ordination may be compatible with the views and engagements of our

spiritual Fathers, is a question which it would be presumptuous in the writer to enter upon.

Under the existing rule, however, he has been induced, on the frequent solicitation of others, to provide two short and plain manuals for those about to offer themselves for Deacons' and Priests' Orders. He encourages the hope that even amidst the anxiety and exertions of the preceding Ember Week, *if not before*, sufficient time may be found for calm and serious reflection on the Ordination Service, with some help of this nature, in seeking that divine strength, which can alone qualify the Christian Minister for *such* a work as that of saving souls, in the name of the Lord. Nor will he dismiss the thought, that even some of his elder brethren in the ministry may be led hereby to larger and abler treatises, ancient and modern, on the Pastoral Office.

That all, both young and old, may be more and more impressed with the respon-

sibility of such a calling, and be brought by the Holy Spirit to the throne of grace and mercy, continually, in a sense of their own failures and necessities, is his earnest prayer to our Heavenly Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wells,
April 23, 1855.

THE FORM AND MANNER

OF

ORDERING OF PRIESTS.

RUBRIC.

When the day appointed by the Bishop is come, after Morning Prayer is ended, there shall be a Sermon or Exhortation, declaring the duty and Office of such as come to be admitted Priests; how necessary that Order is in the Church of Christ; and also how the people ought to esteem them in their Office.

MEDITATION I.

More than a year has passed since I received my commission as Deacon in the Church of Christ; and now I am about to offer myself for the still more responsible office of the Priesthood. This is indeed a most important step. The Deacon is only

a helper to the Priest. But the Order of the Priesthood includes the most solemn transactions between Heaven and earth. It involves the most awful communications between God and man. "A Pastor "is the deputy of Christ for the reducing "of man to the obedience of God." "Christ being not to continue upon earth, "after He had fulfilled the work of recon- "ciliation, to be received up into Heaven, "He constituted deputies in His place, "and these are Priests[1]."

In offering myself as a Deacon, it is possible that I may have acted from impulse, self-interest, or without consideration. But the merciful God hath spared my life, and given me opportunity for reviewing my motives. Before the heart-searching God must I test my purpose and conduct, and ascertain whether I have been a dissembler or a faithful servant; sincere, or a mere actor in holy things. "Search

[1] G. Herbert.

"me, O God, and know my heart. Try me, "and know my thoughts, and see if there "be any wicked way in me, and lead me "in the way everlasting."

If it were necessary, in my earliest ministrations, for assurance to be given that, after inquiry and examination, I was apt and meet for learning and godly conversation, to exercise my Ministry duly to the honour of God and the edifying of His Church—how solemn is the obligation now on me, that I should be better instructed in the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and better disciplined in my own soul, ere I presume to seek the Stewardship of the Mysteries of God.

I am by no means to take for granted that I have a right to the Priesthood because I was admitted to the office of a Deacon. In the ancient Church we read that many were thought worthy of the latter grade of the Ministry who were not considered competent for the former. Devout minds in our own Church have

shrunk from aspiring to the second Order, who felt honoured before God in having attained the Diaconate. And much is it to be desired that an Order of Deacons may be restored, content during a longer probation, if not for ever, to serve the Lord in that honourable, but less exalted, position. The inspired Apostle speaks of our "purchasing the good degree" of the Priesthood—intimating higher advances in grace and wisdom. Does it not abase me to reflect how little I have advanced since the Bishop laid his hands on me, "in the "Person of Christ," and bade me take authority for the work? Have I been puffed up with the importance of my station? Has not idleness paralyzed me at times? Have I not neglected study under the pretence of being too busy in the parish, or being occupied in preparing sermons? Or have I, on the other hand, been over my books, or been writing laboured orations for effect, when I should have been searching out for the souls under Satan's thraldom? Does my conscience, in this solemn hour, testify against me as

having given way to undue levity after hearing my God requiring me to be "*grave?*" On no occasion has double-dealing, smoothing, shuffling, through fear of man, betrayed me? Have I been mortified in the use of food, or at any time self-indulgent in society, as well as when alone? Has the love of money exercised its influence over me, in hoarding, or spending, or taking unwarranted means for increasing my income? Have I striven to "hold the "mystery of the Faith in a pure con- "science," or have I been tempted by latitudinarian novelties, neological subtleties, or aims at originality, to lose sight of "the "truth as it is in Jesus?" Have I exalted Him as the only, the all-sufficient Saviour, or have I preached myself, or confused my hearers with false or incomplete views of "the Faith once delivered to the saints?" Have I, when without a home, sought to imbue the mind of the family where I lodged with the principles of the Gospel; or, having a family, have I endeavoured to rule that little household as a true part of the Church of God? Have I seized every

opportunity of communion with God, and loved to "walk with God," especially at the times and seasons appointed by the Church, instead of seeking to escape from myself, in the refinement or excitement of mixed society?

Perhaps I am wrong in not taking a longer time to gird myself for the Priesthood. I am hardly aware, probably, of the infinite distance between the two grades; of the vast accession of spiritual authority, and increased responsibility, attaching to the office of the Priesthood. Let no reasons of mere Parochial convenience, no desire for exaltation, no anxiety to be in a position for *preferment*, weigh with me in such a case.

I cannot but observe how much more earnest is the appeal of the Bishop to the Congregation, to interpose and testify against any who are unmeet for the Priest's office, than in the case of Deacons; and

again, from this solemn admonition I would take heed, lest I should be stretching forth my hand to touch the Ark without warrant. Man may examine me. Man may inquire into my outward course. Yea, I may scrutinize my own motives and course hitherto, and not be judged. But "Thou, O Lord, "if Thou shouldest be extreme to mark "what is done amiss, who may abide it! "But there is mercy with Thee, therefore "shalt Thou be feared."

PRAYER.

O MOST HOLY FATHER, I would humble myself before Thee, as unworthy to "be a "doorkeeper in the House of the Lord;" as one that hath been a transgressor from my youth up even until now. Yet, O Lord, what great mercies hast Thou shown me; not only in bringing me nigh unto Thyself in Christ Jesus, but sending me forth to preach thy Holy Word, to help in the ministration of thy blessed Sacraments, to relieve the poor, in thy name to tend the lambs

of thy fold. O Lord, how imperfectly have I served Thee herein! My heart hath been too often in the world, while my feet have been treading the courts of thy Sanctuary, and compassing thine altar. My thoughts and conversation have been light and vain; my appetites unbridled; my tongue faithless and severe; and my hopes have been more set on earthly than Heavenly things. Thou hast granted me grace and opportunity, in the past year, to know the plague of my own heart. But I have prophesied smooth things to my soul, and instead of seeking mercy for the profanation of holy things at my hands, lo, I am daring enough to draw more nigh to the Holy of Holies, and even to seek the office of the Priesthood. O Lord, if Thou seest me too weak, and defiled, and unsteady for this holy work, forbid me to come nigher till the dross be more purged away. But if my soul hath been made willing in the day of thy power, receive me amidst all my imperfection. Lord Jesus, I desire to follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest. Lord, cast me not

away from thy presence at this time. Lord, why cannot I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. In thy strength I will seek for the souls purchased by thy precious blood, Lord Jesus. Bid me come unto Thee, and I will come. And though I be ready at times to sink amid the storms and waves of this troublesome world, yet stretch forth thy hand to uphold me, and to banish my fears, and make me to live, not unto myself, but unto Thee, who lovedst me, and washedst me in thine own blood, and willest not that any should perish, but that all should come unto life everlasting. *Amen.*

MEDITATION II.

RUBRIC.

First, the Archdeacon, or in his absence, one appointed in his stead, shall present unto the Bishop (sitting in his chair near to the holy Table) all them that shall receive the Order of Priesthood that day (each of them being decently habited) and say,

"REVEREND Father in God, I present unto

"you these persons present, to be admitted "to the Order of Priesthood." The Bishop: "Take heed that the persons, whom ye pre- "sent unto us, be apt and meet, for their "learning and godly conversation, to exer- "cise their Ministry duly, to the honour of "God, and the edifying of His Church." The Archdeacon shall answer, "I have "enquired of them, and also examined "them, and think them so to be."

Then the Bishop shall say unto the people: "Good people, these are they "whom we purpose, God willing, to re- "ceive this day unto the holy Office of "Priesthood: For after due examination "we find not to the contrary, but that they "be lawfully called to their Function and "Ministry, and that they be persons meet "for the same. But yet if there be any "of you who knoweth any impediment, "or notable crime, in any of them, for the "which he ought not to be received into "this holy Ministry, let him come forth "in the Name of God, and shew what the "Crime or Impediment is."

"And if any great Crime or Impediment

"be objected, the Bishop shall surcease from "Ordering that person, until such time as "the party accused shall be found clear of "that crime."

"Then the Bishop (commending such as "shall be found meet to be Ordered to the "prayers of the Congregation) shall, with "the Clergy and people present, sing or say "the Litany, with the Prayers, as is before "appointed in the Form of Ordering Dea- "cons; save only that in the proper Suf- "frage there added, the word [Deacons] "shall be omitted, and the word [Priests] "inserted instead of it."

Can I ever forget the solemn scene of my Ordination as Deacon? will the scene be less impressive and less full of warning when I offer myself as Priest? The Bishop in his chair near the Holy Table; the Arch-deacon vouching for my fitness; the candidates, habited in the white robe, a pledge and symbol of purity; above all, the Presence of Christ in His Church realized by

faith. To what can I compare this mysterious spectacle, in which I have once been bearing a part, and again am about so to do —to what upon earth !—Even the triumph after a victory, or the gorgeous pageant of a coronation, sinks into insignificance, in comparison, before the eye of faith. Transitoriness is written on the one; Eternity is inscribed on the other. The one is of earth, the other of Heaven. To behold a number of young men, fresh in all the vigour of youth, with thoughtfulness and self-denial calmly putting away from them the cup of pleasure, and resolutely devoting themselves to the service of God, for carrying out the Gospel of Salvation, binding themselves by vow to live *above* the world, while compelled to mingle in the throng thereof; pledging themselves to spend and be spent in rescuing souls from the snares of hell—to hear them give this pledge; and to listen to Christ, speaking from Heaven, through His anointed servant, and granting the Commission to act in His name, and giving strength to fulfil His purpose—this is a

scene not unworthy of the House of God, and the very gate of Heaven.

This pledge have I once given. This pledge I am about to enlarge, and to take again. O gracious God! who didst smite Nadab and Abihu with death, how is it that I have escaped thy just wrath, for my weakness, presumption, neglect, ignorance, vain-glory, false concession to the world, fear of man, self-indulgence, and forgetfulness of Thee, O Lord? I have been spared to magnify thy goodness, exercised in bringing conviction to my heart, and leading me to repentance. Oh that I could undo the harm which my trifling, and deadness in the work, and compromise of thy honour have occasioned! Oh that I may have access, more effectually, to the souls which have not been tended as they might at my hands! How will I labour to imbue them with the love of a crucified Jesus, and strive to conform them to the mind that was in Christ! — "TAKE HEED:"—Once more shall I hear those

soul-searching words, and be sent to look back on the past year, to see whether my promise of going forth as Christ's Minister was a living reality, or a hideous untruth. Perhaps (the God of mercy forbid it!)—perhaps I am actually less devoted to God than when I first presented myself. I hear my Lord say to one, "Thou hast left "thy first love"—"do thy first works." Why may not this be spoken to *me*, since I know how far short I come of "godly "conversation and Christian learning," compared with what should be found in one acting in the name of Christ? He that is to teach others must have first been a faithful learner. He that presumes to set himself up as an example to others must not only not resist grace, but be filled with the Spirit. If I have shown learning unsanctified by grace, I have been working for the Prince of this world. If I have thought to have been serving Thee, and have been wasting my talent, under pretence of magnifying grace—then I have been tempting God. If I have not availed myself of the means afforded to acquire competent know-

ledge, suitable to the higher office, I richly deserve to be even now rejected. In what trustworthy situations is a man placed who is known to be unfit, where the goods of *this* world are at stake? And is it in the case of SOULS only that we may be careless? Never-dying souls—souls that have been ransomed and taken into membership with Him that purchased them by His blood upon the Cross? It is awful to think of. Yet I am sure that I have, at times, acted with less consideration where a soul was concerned, than I should if something of value connected with this world had been entrusted to me. If the other occupations which have pressed upon me as a Deacon, and gifts of a moderate talent, have prevented my being learned, have I, at least, taken pains to know more of the sacred truths and subjects of my ministerial calling, than when I was admitted Deacon? It will be a sin in me to hear the solemn charge of the Bishop, then pledge myself, and afterwards be an *idler* in the vineyard of the Lord.

But, though I take shame to myself for

having neglected sacred study, I abhor myself in dust and ashes, when I remember that I ought to have made actual progress in "godly conversation." I cannot content myself, under such a requirement, with any thing less than dispositions aiming at being *godly*. I mourn that I have not striven to act *in* God and *for* God; striven to refer all to God; to centre my motives in Him, as reconciled unto me, and adopting me in His Son Christ Jesus, and giving me His Spirit to dwell within me. In what part of the past year, O! my gracious God, do these words appertain unto my course of life, and state of heart—"Whose "I am, and whom I serve?" Oh that I had thought more of thy glory, and less of my own ease, pleasure, and praise! Oh that I had not forgotten in ministering thy word that it was *thy* word, and that Thou hast said—"My word shall not return unto "Me void!" Would to God I had more devoutly meditated on *Thee* as *actually present*, where two or three are gathered together in thy name, in prayers and intercessions and the Holy Sacraments! It

is thy command, that, "whether we eat "or drink, or whatsoever we do, we should "do all to the glory of God." I cannot but condemn myself for not more earnestly seeking thy help in what I have undertaken, and thy honour and glory in the work before me.

Surely, if my motives had been thus directed to their true object, I should have hoped, and watched, in order to see more fruit from my labours. But if we forget that the increase is from God, we shall plant and water but in vain. I have been humbled at times to see the few worshippers at Church, the thinning of the school; the indifference shown to my pastoral visits; the few communicants; the immorality in the place where I have been ministering. Instead of wishing for more gifts, I should have endeavoured, with pure and single intention, to correct my own failures, to promote the glory of God, and to have an eye to the coming of Christ's kingdom. The probationary year has run out. Souls

have been snatched away from under my hand. Where are some of them, at this moment? Have all, over whom I ministered in the grave, passed away in peace to Paradise? Can I even hope it, knowing all that I do know about them? Did I do all in my power to save them? It will be a fearful addition to the agony of the careless minister, himself a castaway, to be followed by the execrations, in the place of torment, of those who have perished through his sloth or error. I cannot think that I am altogether free from this charge. Inexperienced as I was, it must be feared that at times, even when I meant to do right, I have given comfort where arousing was needed; or I have discouraged where the conscience needed soothing. Of some I have felt actually afraid. The mind of one I have misconceived, another I have avoided in disgust. I can only pray —"Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O "Lord." Deeper and more solemn than formerly at my Deacon's orders, is the Bishop's call to forbid my entrance into the Priesthood, if any person should know

cause or impediment. If no voice be raised aloud against me, and if the intercession, which he invites from the congregation, be earnestly offered in my behalf, I will gird myself with divine armour anew. He, that heard the prayer of Job for his friends, He, that answered the Lord's intercession for His enemies, will give me more grace. "I will go in the strength of the Lord God. "I will make mention of His righteousness "only."

PRAYER.

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, have mercy upon me! Who am I, a vile sinner, that I should be thought meet for such an office, as the Son of God alone could fulfil! I pledged myself to live for Thee, and since that time I have not sought thy glory, but have lived too much for myself, and for the world. The blessed Jesus could say, "I have glorified Thee on "the earth; I have finished the work "which Thou gavest me to do." But, O my God, I have feared the face of man,

and have trembled under the scorn and the frown of man. I have deceived myself, by thinking to purchase man's good will in thy cause, by surrender of thy work. When I should have been meditating on thy word, and the conflicts of thy Church, and the stretching forth of thine arm, and thy prophecies of truth, and miracles of love, and the services of the sanctuary, I have suffered my mind to wander among the light studies of the world—and so far from becoming more apt and meet for a higher Ministry, I tremble lest in thy sight I be a backslider, and be found more unfit for thy service now, than when I first prayed Thee to send me forth as a labourer in thy harvest. Most gracious God! hear the secret intercession of thy Church for me, and for all who are now venturing on higher vows in the ministry. Hear the open supplications for us offered up in the sanctuary, that we may be vessels fitted for the Master's service. But, above all, hear the prevailing voice of Him that ever liveth at thy right hand, to make intercession for us, and perfect our weak-

ness in the strength of that blessed One, Jesus Christ, the Righteous. *Amen.*

MEDITATION III.

Impressive as the Litany and other prayers of the Church are at all times,—at the hour when I am binding myself with such a vow, they seem doubly so. Then does the cry for mercy on me as a miserable sinner, to each person of the blessed Trinity, come more than ever from the heart. The sentences of deprecation for deliverance from evil, the obsecration of our now glorified Saviour by all the humbling and agonizing scenes of His life on earth, bring the soul into closest communion with God. As the Litany proceeds, one can hardly help feeling the vibration of Catholic love, while interceding for all in their several orders, especially when I remember that I have once bound myself, and am about to renew the bond, to become answerable for the salvation of others. When the service for the Holy Commu-

nion commences, the commands proclaimed by the voice of God Himself penetrate the heart of him who comes forward as the messenger of Heaven. If it was sinful at all times, how much more sinful, since my Ordination as Deacon, to have ever made a God of this world, by giving any person or any thing the chief place in my mind! How unworthy my conceptions of the Most High, which have been suffered to intrude! While uttering, even at the altar, the most solemn words of prayer, have I not dishonoured God's name by weak or wandering thoughts? In no instance have I, the teacher of others, lowered the sanctity of the Lord's Day? Have inflated thoughts of my ministerial dignity ever made me violate the deference due to a parent's wishes? Preserved from outward contamination, has the inmost heart never been defiled by thoughts and illusions of folly and impurity? Has self-denial in every case imposed its restraint on indulgences which might have been spared; and the money saved been offered in God's service? Has the temptation to

censorious remark, sarcastic jest, or jeering insinuation, or scornful look, never made me an offender under the "ninth "Commandment?" Or have I not to blame myself for discontent, and desires after better things than the humble lot of a Curate? Verily, I believe that I know not the half of my guiltiness before God. But, O Lord! I pray Thee to create and make in me a new and contrite heart. Teach me to cry in sincerity, "God be merciful to "me a sinner!" The only sure proof that I can have of not being a deceiver, is, consciousness of unworthiness, and desire after closer conformity to thy blessed Son. The nearer I live to Thee in prayer, the more I must become aware of my unlikeness to Thee in thy holiness, thy perfection.

THE COLLECT.

Almighty God, Giver of all good things, who by thy Holy Spirit hast appointed divers orders of Ministers in thy Church; mercifully behold these thy servants now called to the office of Priesthood; and re-

plenish them so with the truth of thy doctrine, and adorn them with innocency of life, that, both by word and good example, they may faithfully serve Thee in this office, to the glory of thy Name, and the edification of thy Church, through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, world without end. *Amen.*

It will be a help to me, in *remembering my ordination vow*, to transcribe this and other portions of the special service into a book for my own use. If I have found this profitable in the past year as a Deacon, much more needful is it when deeper vows and higher responsibilities are to be engaged in, and when richer gifts of grace will, I humbly trust, have been imparted. And if this record be frequently reviewed, and notices of special mercies and imperfections, and trials, and difficulties overcome, be thoughtfully inserted—a valuable Monitor will be at hand to keep my

spirit lowly, thankful, and confiding in Christ Jesus.

If I compare the words of the Collect with the preface to the Ordination service, I am taught by the Church that "from the "Apostles' time there have been these "(divers) orders of ministers in Christ's "Church—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons." I am unable therefore to recognise a ministry proceeding on equality of orders. It is not my province to venture on saying how far ecclesiastical systems, which set at nought an ordinance derived from inspired Apostles, may share in the blessings of grace. I can, and I do, pray for all who bear the name, and teach in the name of Christ. But I can only *act* in conjunction with those who will be ruled by the voice of Scripture, attested by traditional authority. And thus I seem to be following the Divine command—"first pure, then "peaceable."

Thus does the Church teach me to hold

up the standard of Truth on all occasions, while not daring to invade the prerogative of God. For it may please Him to cause His grace to run in a channel not marked out in Holy Scripture; He may thus appoint, for the help, or the correction of His Church. To God's gracious mercy we safely commend the cause of those who have not their seals of office attested by the authority descending in regular succession from the Apostles' days. But how humbled have I felt, in the past year, to remember how clear and authenticated was my call to be the Lord's servant, and yet how miserably I have served that gracious Lord! I have trembled at the thought—here am I, undertaking to make others fit for the kingdom of heaven, while I myself have not attained to that meetness. But in the most painful hours of fear and despondency, I have been sustained, and I feel sure that I shall be yet more powerfully upheld, by the assurance —"Have not I sent thee?" "I am with "you always, even unto the end of the "world." "Blessed be the Lord my

"strength, who teacheth my hands to war,
"and my fingers to fight."

"I must pray to be replenished with the truth of God's Word." When I reflect at how inexperienced an age I was intrusted with the "sword of the Spirit," and have been required, again and again, to expound and apply the Word of God, must I not fear that I have been guilty of some error? Perhaps, in one case, I may have confused or distressed the mind, in unfolding the mystery of the Holy Trinity. I may have undervalued and not duly set forth the mighty truth of the Incarnation of God the Son; or the great Atonement of the Son of God upon the cross; or the nature of His Kingdom; or the office of the Comforter. Perhaps I have misrepresented the character of the two Holy Sacraments, or the delegated ministry of Christ in His Church. Already do I discover that sermons, for which I once received formal and fulsome compliment, are defective in tone and in truth; that exhortation in

private was ill-directed to the conscience; and that, amongst the young, I have failed in arresting their attention, and bringing the word to bear on their hearts. Sometimes, in attempting to be plain, my style has degenerated into coarse familiarity; or, while endeavouring at accuracy and fulness, my teaching has been clouded and bewildering; or, in aiming at false eloquence, the common people have not heard me gladly. In vain is truth set forth, if it be not in words that can be understood, and with warmth of application that reaches the heart. If I had thought more of our blessed Lord, of the simplicity, the fervour, the depth, the care, the tenderness of His discourses, and sought more earnestly His promised grace, I should not have to lament over the unprofitableness of my ministrations.

But the Church teaches us also to pray for "innocency of life." And although man cannot reach the spotlessness of an angel, I may attain, by unfailing grace, to

the consistency of a faithful servant of God. While I see much to lament as wanting hitherto in my course, I must aim higher. A Minister of Christ may and must, in the Divine strength, become spiritual in mind, pure in motive, watchful over self, loving to the brethren, devout before God—sincere, temperate, forgiving, meek-tempered, and humble-minded. It is impossible for us to give way to any one sin unchecked, without damaging the whole course of our ministrations. "Some sins "are open, going before." If I indulge on any occasion in undue conviviality, or am extravagant, or be even suspected of unchastity, or be passionate, or covetous, how can I ever touch on these subjects from the pulpit, without provoking scorn or awakening pity? Have I not seen cases of this kind, which, although mourned in dust and ashes, are never forgotten in a parish? "Christians must be examples to "others; but Christian ministers must be "examples to the examples themselves."

Our great care must be, O Lord, to remember that we are to "*serve Thee*, to "the glory of thy name and the edification "of thy Church." Our high privilege it is, while others are occupied in the general concerns of life, to be employed immediately about the throne of the King of Glory. Now, we are sent forth on a message of mercy. Now, on a mission of rebuke. Now, to open the gates of salvation. At another time, to forbid entrance to the impenitent. Our calling is from God. Our work is God's work carried out by the hand of man. And our help is in the name of the Lord. I cannot too often be reminded, that when I am called to the Priesthood and am teaching, God is teaching by me. The intercession of the great High Priest with the Father, and the unction of the Spirit give efficacy, in what measure it pleaseth God. And surely no thought is more calculated to fix my mind on the glory of God, and stir me up to the edification of His Church, than this, that I am acting in the name of God; and that I must not shun declaring the whole

counsel of God, in the Church of Christ, which He hath purchased with His own blood.

PRAYER.

Lord, God Almighty! Thou sittest on thy throne in heaven, in glory; and out of that throne proceed lightnings and thunderings and voices; and yet there is mercy for them that are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. O most holy God! if the heavenly spirits fall down before Thee in adoration and love, how shall we approach Thee? If there be seven spirits, and living creatures, and elders, and differing orders of Cherub and Seraph, how shall we not recognise thy hand which hath appointed different degrees and orders in thy Church upon earth? It is by thy Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth and love and comfort, that these thy Divine ordinances be fixed. O Lord, may that good Spirit ever dwell in thy Church amongst us, and purify, and strengthen, and stablish us before Thee. It is only in the assured support of that blessed Guide and

Comforter, that I dare, after perceiving my past weakness in the Ministry, presume to stretch forth my hand for admission into the Priesthood. Thy truth, O Lord, is one, for ever and ever. Fill my soul with that truth in all its completeness, and enable me to impart the same unto others. And may the spirit of holiness so transform me in mind, that I may be endued with innocency of life; and that thy light, shining on me, may shine by me on others, in all godliness of example, to thine own glory, and the edification of thy Church, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

MEDITATION IV.

THE EPISTLE. *Ephes.* iv. 7.

Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore He saith, when He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now

that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things. And He gave some, Apostles; and some, Prophets; and some, Evangelists; and some, Pastors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

Great has been the mercy and consideration of God in giving His servants so much guidance of Revelation as to the spirit in which their ministry should be conducted, and the course in which they should proceed. In the writings of Moses and the Prophets, we learn much of what stamp the messenger of Heaven should be. And not only the entire life of the Holy

Jesus, but His frequent exhortations, and the inspired teaching of the Apostles, set before us what sort of persons we must strive to become. In the Epistle in the service for Priests' Orders is declared the variety of offices, and diversity of gifts provided in the Christian Church. Here I read, with consolation not to be described, that "unto every one of us is given grace, "according to the measure of the gifts of "Christ." If I have sincerely prayed for direction, may I not believe that my position in His vineyard is of the Lord's choosing, and that my steps shall be ordered therein to His glory? Nor this alone. My qualifications, such indeed as they are, my endowments, in whatever degree possessed, are from Him. Shall I not believe that divine light and needful strength are continually vouchsafed from above, to the labourer in the Lord? and what a hope is this for me to lean on! In my hour of ignorance have I not found direction? in the day of weakness was not strength imparted? And why should I rob my soul of the sustaining thought—that Thou, O

Lord, didst turn my darkness into light, and my weakness into strength?

"Wherefore He saith, When He ascended "up on high, He led captivity captive, and "gave gifts unto men. (Now that He as- "cended, what is it but that He also de- "scended first into the lower parts of the "earth? He that descended is the same "also that ascended up far above all "heavens, that He might fill all things.)"

O! blessed Lord, I believe that thou didst purchase the right of thus bestowing thy gifts. Thou, O! blessed Jesus, by becoming man, and by taking our nature into thy Godhead, and by doing always the things that pleased the Father, hast acquired the right of giving gifts unto men. Because Thou didst humble thyself, and live and die for us, therefore God hath highly exalted Thee and given Thee a name which is above every name--"that at "the name of Jesus every knee should bow, "of things in heaven, and things in earth, "and things under the earth; and that every

" tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is " Lord, to the glory of God the Father." In thy human nature, O! blessed Saviour, Thou art exalted to the divine glory which Thou hadst with the Father before the world was. But when thine hour had arrived, and the day of Pentecost was fully come, then came down the Comforter from the Father and the Son. Then were distributed the gifts of authority, and tongues, and healing, and prophecy. Then issued forth from thy right hand, as Lord of all, all needful endowments for planting and nourishing the tree of life, for the healing of the nations! O! worthy the Lamb that was slain, and has redeemed us to God by His blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and has made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth.

"And He gave some, Apostles; and some, " Prophets; and some, Evangelists; and " some, Pastors and Teachers; for the per- " fecting of the saints, for the work of the

"ministry, for the edifying of the body of "Christ."

The Apostles were the first receivers of grace. To them spake the Son of God on the very day of His glorious resurrection —"Receive ye the Holy Ghost." As the Father sent the Lord Jesus, even so did He send them. He constituted them the first Bishops, or Apostles. They had the right conceded, of appointing others to succeed them in His name.

I look with wonder and gratitude on the rich variety of offices appointed at first to nourish the life of the infant Church of Christ. Though these were all soon to settle in the three "divers orders" of Bishop, Priest, and Deacon, yet in the dawn of the Gospel, they were constituted as essential to its early growth. The richly-coloured petal soon falls off, though beautiful in its day; while the seed remains to serve in its turn, and to propagate the life of the plant. The *Prophet*, like Agabus, told of events that quickly came to pass,

and testified to the truth of the Gospel as emanating from God. And, no doubt, beyond the bounds of the prophet of old, the Christian prophet had a wide sphere assigned him of counselling and expounding, warning and reproving in the name of Him by whom He was sent. The *Evangelist*, like St. Philip, went forth on a wider circuit carrying the glad tidings abroad, proclaiming peace to them that were afar off and to them that were nigh—beginning at the Scriptures, and preaching unto them Jesus, and sending souls on their way rejoicing. Others however had a more fixed position as *Pastors* and *Teachers*. Every pastor must be a teacher. He must know to what places he should lead the flock of the good Shepherd, where the green pastures of Christian doctrine are fresh and nourishing, and where the still waters of meditation and communion with God are flowing in silence and in peace. The stedfastness of the Christian will be always in just proportion to the clearness of the objects presented by faith. If any vital doctrine

be hidden or distorted, the mind will suffer accordingly.

Can I think of these things, and not be afraid lest, in my unripe instruction, I may have lowered or misrepresented God's holy purposes? How fervently have I henceforth need to pray when preparing or delivering instruction from the oracles of truth, that I may be kept from error! How gracious is God in overruling our poor endeavours to His glory; driving away the chaff of human infirmity, and planting the seed effectually for good, when we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus, the Lord!

"For the perfecting of the saints," the good Lord taketh much care. It is a fault, sometimes, that we preach God's message, as if our only work were to convert sinners from the error of their way. But it ought not to be forgotten that the converted have need to be kept from falling back; the weak, who are walking in the right way, need to be upheld and strengthened; and even the most advanced Christian has

much dross to be purged away, and much to do in brightening and employing the gifts which God's grace has imparted to him. Yet, even at the last, he can look to the sprinkling of Christ's blood alone, to establish his hope of acceptance. Nevertheless, in full faith, the work of the Ministry must be carried on. The work is God's work. It is for His honour that no soul should be snatched away by the tempter. It is by the wisdom from above, and the strength of His arm, that the Church is built up, and all true Christians, in their several degrees, shall be made partakers of His kingdom and blessedness.

"Till we all come in the unity of the "faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of "God, unto a perfect man, unto the mea-"sure of the stature of the fulness of "Christ."

God's gifts are infinitely diversified. While my lot has been that of a humble labourer, as a helper to the priest, another has had the entire charge of a parish.

Another has been serving God in putting forth some learned or devout work of study. Others are set over us as spiritual fathers and rulers in the Lord. Some as professors in the schools of learning. Others on missions to the colonists and heathen. These are the teachers. And the disciples, many in number, are gathering up the instruction afforded, following on to know the Lord, and looking forward to that day of promise when there shall be one fold and one shepherd. "O! pray for the peace "of Jerusalem. They shall prosper that "love Thee. Peace be within thy walls, "and plenteousness within thy palaces!" Thus does the devout Psalmist pray. And surely we cannot too earnestly take up the words and the spirit of the inspired one. We do not, it is to be feared, prize unity as we ought. And yet, was it not among the last prayers of the blessed Jesus— "that they all may be one?" Let me not seek a false bond of unity, by impatient advances towards bodies of Christians, whom we cannot but look on as faulty in the faith, and erroneous in discipline. On

the other hand, we hardly perhaps, as a Church, are anxious enough for the time to come when, by mutual concession, but without any compromise of truth, we may behold the goodly sight of the one Catholic Church restored to visible communion and brotherly love. I trust that it is not presumptuous to hope that our branch of the Church, the upholder of the faith, the preserved of the Lord through so many perils and storms, may be one of the chief instruments in bringing about that blessed consummation of the divine will: and therefore, while I have need to condemn myself for every false step herein, I will strive more and more to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; I will pray without ceasing to that God who is the author of peace, and lover of concord, to make Jerusalem a praise in the earth; and I will seek to bring others, by growing in grace, and myself by running the way of God's commands, "unto a perfect "man—unto the measure of the stature of "the fulness of Christ."

PRAYER.

O God, the fountain of all wisdom, and truth, and peace, who art in thyself love, whom all the heavenly hosts obey in a wonderful order of harmony and love, look down upon thy Church in this land. Give us grace to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions. Take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly union and concord. That as there is but "one body and one spirit, one hope "of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one "baptism, one God and Father of us all"— so we may henceforth be of one heart and one soul, united in one holy bond of peace, and faith, and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

MEDITATION V.

After this shall be read for the Gospel part of the ninth chapter of St. Matthew, as followeth: St. Matt. ix. 36:—

"When Jesus saw the multitudes, "He was moved with compassion on "them, because they fainted, and were "scattered abroad, as sheep having no "shepherd. Then saith He unto His dis- "ciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but "the labourers are few; pray ye therefore "the Lord of the harvest, that He will "send forth labourers into His harvest."

Or else, this that followeth out of St. John x. 1:—

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that "entereth not by the door into the sheep- "fold, but climbeth up some other way, the "same is a thief and a robber. But he "that entereth in by the door is the "shepherd of the sheep. To him the por- "ter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: "and he calleth his own sheep by name, "and leadeth them out. And when he "putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth "before them, and the sheep follow him: "for they know his voice. And a stranger "will they not follow, but will flee from "him: for they know not the voice of "strangers. This parable spake Jesus unto

"them: but they understood not what
"things they were which He spake unto
"them. Then said Jesus unto them again,
"Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the
"door of the sheep. All that ever came
"before me are thieves and robbers: but
"the sheep did not hear them. I am the
"door: by Me if any man enter in, he
"shall be saved, and shall go in and out,
"and find pasture. The thief cometh not,
"but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy:
"I am come that they might have life, and
"that they might have it more abundantly.
"I am the good shepherd: the good
"shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.
"But he that is an hireling, and not the
"shepherd, whose own the sheep are not,
"seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the
"sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth
"them, and scattereth the sheep. The
"hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling,
"and careth not for the sheep. I am the
"good shepherd, and know my sheep, and
"am known of mine. As the Father
"knoweth me, even so know I the Father:
"and I lay down my life for the sheep.

"And other sheep I have, which are not of "this fold: them also I must bring, and "they shall hear my voice; and there shall "be one fold, and one shepherd."

When thou sawest the multitudes, O! blessed Jesus, that they fainted and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd, thy compassion was moved. What love was thine, to stoop to the feelings and pain and sorrows of our nature! What infinite love brought Thee down from heaven, to dwell amongst us, to mourn for us, to succour us, to redeem us! It was the very helplessness of the lost ones which drew forth the tenderness of our Saviour's spirit. What a contrast is shown in the mind of Christ, to the cold and selfish spirit of the world! We can go on from day to day enjoying ourselves, without scarcely a thought for those who are neglected, and in a perishing state. Until we attain some portion of the mind of Christ in *sympathy*, we are comparatively useless as His ministers. Too closely we cannot study the divine model of the Lord Jesus for the Ministerial character. Too ear-

nestly we can never pray for this holy sympathy. But have I, at all times, entered into the feelings of those under my charge? Was the immortal soul thought of in all its preciousness? Was it cared for, and sought after, as something of so great value as to call for ransom in the blood of the incarnate Son of God? Did I rejoice with them that were rejoicing, and weep with those that wept? Rather, has not selfishness made me avoid or hasten from such scenes? Has it not clad me in a frigid garb, and rendered my words uncongenial, and my manner indifferent, or perhaps affectedly and unreally sympathizing?

Jesus thought of the multitudes, and was moved with compassion. And can I dwell on the lot of the immigrant, the heathen, the outcast sons of Israel, the thousands unprovided for in our large towns, and scattered hamlets, and wide heaths, without a sigh, without a finger stretched out for their bodily and spiritual aid? At least, let me fail not to pray, that more and more labourers may be

sent forth by the Lord of the harvest; men of God; dead to the fascinations of the world, and the unsatisfying calls of the flesh; men of prayer, of zeal, simplicity, and love; men whose chief joy and care it shall be to save the soul alive.

St. John x. 1.

Let me devoutly meditate on these words of our Lord: and may I lay to heart the difference as here set before me between a true and a false Pastor; between sound and corrupt doctrine; between a Church founded on the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, and one that can show no claim to this privilege. Can I be too thankful for the clearness of my legitimate call as a minister of Christ? What agony must be felt in the minds of those, who, in transacting the dread mysteries connecting heaven and earth, have the secret misgiving—Am I authorized in thus speaking in God's name? Where is the token of my Commission? How do I know that grace will accompany

this outward visible sign? May I not be deluding others, and obstructing the course of my own soul? Now, if I be rightly ordained, though I were even myself no partaker in the blessings offered by my hands, yet shall they not fail in conveying God's mercy and strength from Him to others. For the ministry is the work of the Lord, and not of man.

Another mark of the true Pastoral character is set before me in the solemn words of our Lord—"the sheep hear his voice: "and he calleth his own sheep by name, "and leadeth them out." Have I been careful to visit at *every* house, and speak a word, in due season, to *every* soul under my charge, and am I resolved to labour more faithfully herein when admitted to the higher vocation? Perhaps in ordinary cases, it is best for me, in parochial visits, at first, to let discourse take its natural turn, and watchfully seek the right moment for investing it with an elevated and sanctifying character.

But I must endeavour to know my sheep by name; to penetrate into the character of each, and to lead out each into a safe track. I must *lead*, not *drive*. There will be cases, indeed, wherein we must force ourselves to reprove, to rebuke, to exhort. But this must be "with all "longsuffering." We must "love to draw," with much forbearance and winning kindness. It is wonderful how much the people will bear from a Pastor, if he will avoid being cold in manner, rough, sharp, sneering, and uncharitable. How did our gracious Master endure the daily provocation even of His Apostles! How, even at the last, did He seek to arouse the flinty conscience of Judas, by an appeal to him on the intended crime, without introducing before the others the name of the offender! "*One of you* shall betray Me." Especially must I more than ever watch for those moments in which bereavement, sickness, wealth, or poverty shall open a passage in the dullest hearts for the Word to enter.

Who has not heard the pastor complain of evils arising among his flock *during his absence?* How careful should I be not to leave the people to "strangers!" Let me not, through mere indolence, "exchange a "sermon or pulpit." Let me not quit my position, save when necessary rest, or guarded relaxation (such as shall render me fitter for my work), or family duties, or imperative calls of friendship bid me away. Nor let my absence be unduly prolonged. It may be an hour of peril to the flock.

A congregation may not, at first, understand the mind of their shepherd. But when his principles are comprehended, no voice will be so dear to them as that of their own shepherd. To him they have unburdened their minds of cares, fears, conflicts, sins, which "a stranger" may not know of. The more frequent and intimate the communication has been, the stronger will the bond become. It is of heavenly texture; and He that formed it will render it safe and pleasant.

"Jesus is the door;" by Him we must enter, priest and people. And woe to the false pastor who sets before his flock any other name, whereby they can be saved, than Jesus Christ and Him crucified! Woe to him who preaches salvation otherwise than as a free gift, through living faith in Jesus! Woe to him that declares Jesus a Saviour for mere enlightenment of the world, and not a Saviour from the penalties of sin, and from the defilement of sin, and from the dominion of sin! Thus, nurtured in humiliation and lively trust, the soul "goes in and out," finds joy and peace in believing, and obtains a heavenly nurture, whereby all the powers within are assimilated by grace to the second Adam. The desire to depart, and to be with Christ, is gradually inwrought; for into His hands may we securely commend our spirit, who has come, "that we may have life, and that "we may have it more abundantly;" who has perfumed the bed of the grave with His holiness, by lying in the sepulchre; and putteth forth His staff to comfort and uphold us in the valley of the shadow of death.

Never may I come under the brand of "the hireling." "The labourer is worthy "of his hire." And if I am not monopolizing the heritage of the Lord, and swallowing up income that would maintain three or four shepherds,—if I am not cringing, pushing, or grasping,—if I am moderate, and thankful to the Lord for my maintenance, I need not fear unjust and hard names while I keep myself under the good Shepherd's eye. But I must not be timid in the cause of the Lord. The wolves and enemies of the flock are many and bold. I must be prepared to resist, to die if need be, sooner than compromise the honour of the Lord, and the truth of His Gospel. The wolf may come in the cloak of heresy, or schism, self-righteousness, worldliness, or antinomianism; with a perverted creed or neological interpretation. I must be prepared to defend the truth with courage, while I may not be wanting in meekness. I must not be found rendering railing for railing, nor be heard preaching in bitter controversy; but I must expose error by the unfolding of the Gospel in all its divine simplicity.

It is this true care for the sheep which led Thee, O blessed Saviour! to lay down thy life for the sheep. And shall I be careless while Thou art so vigilant? Shall my heart be cold, while thy spirit overfloweth with love? In joyful hope may I look forward to that blessed period, when "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and "the leopard shall lie down with the kid, "and the young lion and the fatling to-"gether; and the earth shall be covered "with the knowledge of the Lord as the "waters cover the sea."

PRAYER.

Almighty God, who art the God of all order and holy harmony in heaven and earth, give thy servant grace to enter this sacred Ministry of the Church in the way which Thou hast appointed. Inspire me with the mind of thy blessed Son, the true Shepherd, that I may know the sheep committed unto my charge, by name; and lead them in the green pastures of piety and love, and bring them to the fountains of living water. Let me never neglect those so entrusted unto me by Thee, nor

leave them to the stranger. But keep me ever on the watch against false brethren, who would poison and destroy the souls of those who have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus. Let me "not count my "life dear unto myself, so that I may "finish my course with joy, and the ministry "received from the Lord Jesus, to testify "the Gospel of the grace of God." Pour into my heart such love for immortal souls, that I may covet no man's silver or gold; but having food and raiment, be therewith content. Set me above the fear of man, that I may boldly resist error, and constantly preach the truth, and patiently suffer for righteousness' sake. Teach me to know thy Son Jesus Christ as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. And grant that having been a faithful guide to thy people, in passing through the wilderness of this world, I may attain unto that blessed life, abundantly provided in the Lord, where the whole flock shall be gathered at the well's mouth before the true Shepherd, and when there shall be one fold and one Shepherd, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

MEDITATION VI.

RUBRIC.

Then the Bishop, sitting in his chair, shall minister unto every one of them the Oath concerning the Queen's Supremacy, as it is before set forth in the Form for the Ordering of Deacons.

I FIND no difficulty in assenting to the terms of this oath, in the limited sense in which it is set before me. Even of Henry VIII. I read, distinctly declaring that he claimed no more in assuming this title than had been conceded to Christian princes in the early ages in their own dominions. I recognise this power accorded to Constantine, Justinian, Charlemagne, &c. I regard this oath in the light of a protest against foreign pretension to supremacy. I look on it chiefly as *negative*. Nor can I forget that the supremacy of the Pope was rejected by authority in this land, at a period when the principles of the Reformation had made but little progress. While our princes intrude not into holy things,

we pray for them as, in a certain sense, ministers of God, and by a certain delegation, bearing the authority of God. We regard obedience to our rulers as a duty, on the ground of government being an ordinance from God. And may the good Lord so direct our hearts that we may, in imitation of the HOLY ONE, "render unto "Cæsar the things that be Cæsar's, and to "God the things that be God's;" and so may God overrule the mind of our Sovereign, that the honour and glory of God, in the upholding of His Church, may be the continual aim of her heart! O Lord, by whom kings reign, and princes exercise justice,—in whose hand is the heart of the king,—turn Thou our Sovereign's heart, as the rivers of water, whithersoever Thou wilt, for Jesus Christ's sake.

RUBRIC.

And that done, he shall say unto them as hereafter followeth.

Let me now meditate on the address of the Bishop. How much fuller and more

searching is it than that delivered to me when I was ordained Deacon! Should not this make me feel the higher responsibility which I am about to incur, and the greater privilege about to be bestowed? In this solemn address I am reminded, 1st, of the *weight* and *dignity* of the ministerial office; 2ndly, of the *motives* which should influence me in the discharge of my office; 3rdly, of the especial *means* to be used in order to a faithful execution of God's work confided to me. The Lord give me grace, indeed, to lay these things to heart! "You "have heard, Brethren, as well in your "private examination, as in the exhorta- "tion now made unto you, and in the holy "Lessons taken out of the Gospel, and the "writings of the Apostles, of what dignity, "and of how great importance this Office "is, whereunto ye are called. And now "again we exhort you, in the Name of our "Lord Jesus Christ, that you have in re- "membrance, into how high a Dignity, and "into how weighty an Office and Charge "ye are called: that is to say, to be Mes- "sengers, Watchmen, and Stewards of the

"Lord; to teach, and to premonish, to "feed and provide for the Lord's family; "to seek for Christ's sheep that are dis- "persed abroad, and His children that are "in this naughty world, that they may be "saved through Christ for ever."

I duly appreciate the term "dignity," applied to the sacred office. Faith must rise upwards on heavenly wings, fully to estimate the awfulness and grandeur of this spiritual position. To what subject can the notion of dignity be applied, if not in reference to an office ordained by God Himself? Does dignity not attach to a service, through which reconciliation is offered from the Majesty on high to a whole world; to an embassy, in which peace is obtained and extended by the vicarious death of the Son of God? Does an awful dignity not belong to a Covenant, the sanctions of which are an eternity of glory, or the endless judgment of hell? Can the thought of dignity be excluded from a system commencing with the fall of man, and only ending when the Judge is seated on His throne? Can the number-

less grand and beneficent Miracles of the Gospel, can the widening stream of Prophecy, can the mysterious communication between God and man in the Sacraments be thought of without the most august impressions of the supreme Lord of all, and of His light reflected from heaven on the earth-born instruments of His will? Shall the office of an envoy, in this perishing world, be thought dignified, whose business it is to reside abroad as representative of an earthly sovereign, or to promote peace between contending nations; and shall *that* office not be regarded as full of dignity, which is appointed by God, and attended by penalties or rewards infinite in their results? The more my mind contemplates the dignity of the *Office*, the more am I abased at the thought of *my* being employed in such a service; lest the unworthiness of the instrument should compromise the majesty and honour of the heavenly King. Let me tremble, O Lord, lest I be judged by Thee for having held out hopes to those whose hearts were still in rebellion against Thee; or for not having

promoted that reverence of mind and body which becometh the worshippers of a holy God; lest the honour of thy Sanctuary, thy Day, thy Word have not in all cases been duly magnified. O! how weighty must that office be, which is held immediately under the King of kings and Lord of lords!

The Bishop proceeds to remind us that we are "*messengers* of the Lord,"—watchmen and stewards. Have I during the period of my ministry duly considered, in preaching the Word, that I was the bearer of a message from God to man? How often would it have given truthfulness and fervour to my sermons to have borne this in mind! I have not been careful enough in delivering the message with fulness, accuracy, and earnestness, corresponding to my sacred position. Have I not been often hurried in the preparation, because time has been wasted on lesser things; and has not my mind been ever led to think of myself, when I ought to have been absorbed

in the thought of Him who sent me on an errand of salvation? O! never may I ascend the pulpit again without recalling the solemn truth, "The Lord and His "Spirit hath sent me." He alone can give the blessing. "His word shall not return "to Him void." "Paul planted, Apollos "watered; God giveth the increase."

I am constituted a "*watchman.*" It was my duty to have looked from my tower, and guarded against the growth of unbelief, the spread of schism, the progress of iniquity. Into *every* house of my spiritual cure I ought to have found my way long before this time. For *every* soul ought I to have watched, as one that "must give account." Did not I fear, however, to admonish one, because he was rich, learned, or great? Have I not neglected others, because their lot was mean, or because I had taken a dislike to them, or from indolence, and want of zeal for God? O Lord, let those words never again cease to sound in my ears: "Son of

"man, I have made thee a watchman unto "the house of Israel: therefore hear the "word at my mouth, and give them warn- "ing. When I say unto the wicked, Thou "shalt surely die; and thou givest him not "warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked "from his wicked way, to save his life; the "same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; "but his blood will I require at *thy* hand." O gracious Lord, forgive my little care for souls, bought at such a price. Pardon my wretched fear of the face of man; my coldness and indifference; my irresolution; my want of sympathy and tenderness of spirit, even where I have sought to recover men; and conform me to the mind of Him that loved us unto the death.

I am appointed a "*steward*." And herein my duty was to have given to each his portion in due season. Has it been my care to adjust my teaching to the capacity and condition of each class and individual? Have my instructions to the young been those of the Pastor more than the school-

teacher? Have I sought out the unclean, profane, and careless, and in the name of God warned them with words of love and awe? Has the mourner been soothed; the backslider recovered; the faithful stablished in the Lord? Did I wait to be sent for, or make my opportunity of speaking a word in season? Have I given over any from listlessness; and to pacify my conscience, said to myself,—to visit such is of no use? How much more might I, in God's name, have accomplished as a *steward* of His mysteries, if I had possessed more faith! Vast treasures of hidden grace were confided to me for enriching His people. But I have been doubting His word, when I should have been acting on it; keeping back what should have been poured forth; afraid of realizing my credentials in full; slow in opening the door of mercy, or, perhaps, with false zeal, "casting pearls "before swine;" and in order to blaze abroad a reputation for activity, admitting those to the highest Mysteries who should have been longer in devout training; or unwisely urging a nearer approach in the

case of those who needed a deeper repentance and a keener conviction of sin.

"Have always therefore printed in your "remembrance, how great a treasure is "committed to your charge. For they are "the sheep of Christ, which He purchased "with His death, and for whom He shed "His blood. The Church and Congrega- "tion whom you must serve, is His Spouse, "and His Body. And if it shall happen "the same Church, or any Member thereof, "to take any hurt or hindrance by reason "of your negligence, ye know the great- "ness of the fault, and also the horrible "punishment that will ensue. Wherefore "consider with yourselves the end of your "Ministry towards the children of God, "towards the Spouse and Body of Christ; "and see that you never cease your labour, "your care and diligence, until you have "done all that lieth in you, according to "your bounden duty, to bring all such as "are or shall be committed to your charge, "unto that agreement in the faith and

"knowledge of God, and to that ripeness "and perfectness of age in Christ, that "there be no place left among you, either "for error in religion, or for viciousness in "life."

The *motives* which call for devotedness in the Ministry should have been more deeply "printed in my remembrance." Redemption is not a mere word, but a stupendous fact. Could I have done the Lord's work so negligently, if I had remembered in all its importance the great truth that every soul in city, town, village, hamlet, heath, street, or alley, has been redeemed and bought with the death and blood of the Son of God? How could I look on them passing by, and not call to mind the cost at which each was ransomed? How could I sit in my room at ease, and not make fresh efforts for those whom I knew to be in danger; for whom, that they might not finally perish, the Blood of God had been poured out on the Cross? Once taken into Christ's Church, souls, unless grace be received in vain, are united to Him by bonds more pure and

strong than those of chaste wedlock. The Church and congregation which I was appointed to serve, is His Spouse and Body. Christ so loved the Church as to give Himself for it. And I fear that I had so little of the mind of Christ within me, that I too often let things take their course, instead of rushing in, and plucking many a one from the fire, like a brand. Was I really aware, that if *any member* should perish—yea, take any hurt or hindrance—through my negligence, my own fault was great, and the punishment ensuing to myself horrible? O! that I may be more aware what it is to have to answer for souls! Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God!

Most solemnly would I lay to heart the *end and object* of my Ministry towards the children of God. Never, from this time, may I cease my labour, care, and diligence, until I have done all that lieth in me, according to my bounden duty, to bring ALL such as are, or shall be, committed to my

charge, unto that agreement in the faith and knowledge of God, and to that ripeness and perfectness of age in Christ, that there be no place left, either for error in religion or viciousness in life. We start sometimes, as young ministers, fresh and hearty in zeal, ready in spirit, if it were possible, to evangelize the world. Nothing, at that time, seems a difficulty. We are ready to labour, to be despised, to quit home and family: and to lay down life itself for our divine Master would be regarded as a privilege of joy.

Is not that zeal, after conflict with the rough, deceitful world, too often found to stiffen and grow cold, degenerating into excess of caution, and common-place formality? But while error of doctrine is abroad, or sin is setting itself up against God, we must "cry aloud and spare not." Let people accuse us, if they will, of carrying things too far, because we refuse to be sportsmen, and to be seen at balls, and ever dining out, and scorning the wise and salutary regulations of the Church. If this be to be vile, would that I had

been more vile; and that I had not accommodated my tone of discourse and habits of life, too often, to a lower standard, hoping thereby, in my folly, to win those who had no heart for heaven.

"Forasmuch then as your Office is both "of so great excellency, and of so great "difficulty, ye see with how great care "and study ye ought to apply yourselves, "as well that ye may shew yourselves duti- "ful and thankful unto that Lord, who "hath placed you in so high a Dignity; as "also to beware, that neither you your- "selves offend, nor be occasion that others "offend. Howbeit, ye cannot have a mind "and will thereto of yourselves; for that "will and ability is given of God alone: "therefore ye ought, and have need, to "pray earnestly for His holy Spirit."

Since then my office is of so great excellency, and of so great difficulty, with what care and study must I apply myself, as well that I show myself dutiful and thankful unto that Lord who hath placed

me in so high a dignity, as also to beware that neither I myself offend, nor be occasion that others offend! No doubt, I have often failed in my past ministerial course by under-calculating the strength and cunning of the soul's enemies, and overrating my own influence, talent, and other powers. To have been safe I should have put on the whole armour of God. It is agonizing to reflect how often, when the morning came, and the work should have been done, with the brightness and regularity of the sun in the heavens, there was no heart for the work. The soul was torpid, as if there were no vow upon it. It seemed palsied. The ministerial Commission appeared a dream, and a temptation came across my mind, as if it seemed wrong to go forth and interrupt people in the palpable and honest labours of their station. O! *then* must we go in prayer to God for a new heart. We ought and have need to pray for a refreshing shower of grace on the barren and dry land of the soul. MEANS must be resorted to for *instant* recovery from such a state. The daily Service of

the Church will thus often be the instrument of reviving the weakened power within. Where this privilege is not granted in public, I would never fail, God helping me, in following the command of the Church; and offering up the solemn services of the day, alone, join in spirit with the whole body of the Church. Some chord will vibrate to the touch of the Comforter. And if I confess with shame my deadly dulness, and entreat for a divine supply of strength from the Holy Ghost, and then go forth to some plain and obvious part of my work, *that* God, who knoweth the frailty of our nature, will raise me up, and enable me to gain the victory over myself.

PRAYER.

O BLESSED LORD, who knowest that, of myself, I have no heart for thy work, no sense of the value of prayer, or of thy condescension in allowing me to come unto Thee, pour into my heart the spirit of prayer and supplication. When I am

dead in the soul, revive me. When I am faint, quicken me. When I have no desire for Thee and thy service, give me the right mind, and the willing spirit, that so I may become strong in thy strength, and glorify Thee by doing all in thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

"And seeing that you cannot by any "other means compass the doing of so "weighty a work, pertaining to the salva- "tion of man, but with doctrine and ex- "hortation taken out of the holy Scrip- "tures, and with a life agreeable to the "same; consider how studious ye ought "to be in reading and learning the Scrip- "tures, and in framing the manners both "of yourselves, and of them that specially "pertain unto you, according to the rule of "the same Scriptures: and for this self- "same cause, how ye ought to forsake and "set aside (as much as you may) all worldly "cares and studies.

"We have good hope that you have well "weighed and pondered these things with

"yourselves long before this time; and "that you have clearly determined, by "God's grace, to give yourselves wholly to "this Office, whereunto it hath pleased "God to call you: so that, as much as "lieth in you, you will apply yourselves "wholly to this one thing, and draw all "your cares and studies this way; and that "you will continually pray to God the "Father, by the Mediation of our only "Saviour Jesus Christ, for the heavenly "assistance of the Holy Ghost; that, by "daily reading and weighing of the Scrip-"tures, ye may wax riper and stronger in "your Ministry; and that ye may so en-"deavour yourselves, from time to time, to "sanctify the lives of you and yours, and "to fashion them after the Rule and Doc-"trine of Christ, that ye may be whole-"some and godly examples and patterns "for the people to follow.

"And now, that this present Congrega-"tion of Christ here assembled may also "understand your minds and wills in these "things, and that this your promise may "the more move you to do your duties, ye

"shall answer plainly to these things, which "we, in the Name of God, and of His "Church, shall demand of you touching "the same."

Another *means* which I have often neglected, is meditation on Holy Scripture. How can I compass the doing so weighty a work as the salvation of man, but with doctrine and exhortation taken out of the Book of salvation? How can my life be agreeable to the same, unless I hide the word of God in my heart, so that I sin not? Ought I not to study therein, in the very languages in which it has pleased God to communicate His will? Surely no effort so quickly draws aside the curtain which separates the world of sense from that of spirit, as pondering the mighty truths that come from God Himself. Nothing so speedily lessens the attraction of earthly cares and studies, as listening to the voice of God coming from this Oracle, while on bended knees I seek His grace to bring home to my heart every word of promise, and every threat against sin. I need not, at fitting seasons, debar myself from studies which

throw light on the sacred page. Nor am I bound to cast away such recreative reading as shall, by unbending the bow of the mind, make it more vigorous afterwards. But the Book of God must be the first and the last: and I must continually remember that the Lord who gave it is He, alone, who can cause it to nourish and purify the soul. The divine Expounder must be ever looked to; or the Bible will be as an ordinary volume—a book of history—a book of morals—but not a book of Inspiration. How wondrously will a few words of Scripture, set home to the conscience by the divine Teacher, stir up the spirit; arouse me from sluggishness; make my path clear in an instant; brace my fainting heart, and elevate the affections! Like David before Keilah, may I always have recourse to the voice that cometh forth from God for my guidance, and boldly follow on where I am thus led forward by Him.

PRAYER.

Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom, who hast not suffered us to walk in doubt-

ful ways, but hast provided a light for our feet, and a lamp for our paths, give grace unto thy servant that I may love thy Word above all things, and meditate therein by night and by day. Let the divine teaching be unto me as the life-giving oracle. Incline mine ear to those blessed testimonies, and hide them within my heart. In that heavenly balance may all my purposes and desires be weighed. And while my great care should be the salvation of my soul, and of them that hear me, cause me ever to be regarding the honour and glory of God, and the fulfilling of thy will in this bounteous gift as my chief object, through our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

MEDITATION VII.

"Do you think in your heart, that you be "truly called, according to the will of our "Lord Jesus Christ, and the order of this "United Church of England and Ireland, "to the Order and Ministry of Priesthood?" "I think it."

I trembled, when it was demanded of me at Deacons' Orders, "do you trust that "you are inwardly moved by the Holy "Ghost to take upon you this Office." Time has been afforded me to test the reality of my conviction. And on preparing to offer myself for the Priesthood, let me not fail to search for sufficient grounds, before I avow my belief "in my heart," that I am called to this higher office. Great is the difference, I ought to feel, between the two positions. The Priest has authority granted him to preach, without restriction; to baptize at all times; to consecrate the elements in the commemorative Sacrifice of Christ's Body and Blood; in God's name to absolve the penitent; to lay on hands in conjunction with the Bishop in the Ordination of Priests. Have I considered these things? Or has familiarity with holy things lowered, instead of exalting, my reverence for the embassy of reconciliation? Perhaps I have regarded the step to the higher station too much as a matter of course. Or have I been tempted by a morbid sensibility to shrink from the

high privilege, as the time was drawing nigh, from false fears, from some worldly adherence, from want of due preparation? Once more, let me search my heart—and if there be found any thing like declining, instead of advancing, or of presumption, where abasement should be felt—let me for a while hold back, and continue to "assist the priest," until my spirit is raised by God's grace to the point from which I have fallen.

Wherefore am I seeking the Priesthood? Is it from the desire of bearing a humble part in saving souls? Is it from the joy of seeing sinners turned, by the power committed to man, from darkness to light? Is it from the comfortable expectation of binding up the broken-hearted, guiding the wanderer, cheering the hopes of the dying penitent? Or is it because there is a living in prospect? Or that I expect to be distinguished as a preacher, and rise to rank, to learned ease, or wealth? Even now, if a diplomatic, or other honourable office were suddenly placed at my disposal, is there the spirit given me to say, "I had

"rather be a door-keeper in the house of "the Lord" than dwell elsewhere in purple and fine linen; I had rather be a poor Curate to the end of my days, than be excluded from the embassy from God to man; I would rather lose every thing upon earth than be debarred the honour of being a ministering servant of Christ. Let me have, at God's hand, but food for the day and raiment to put on—and be the means, under the Holy Ghost, of saving souls alive —and the desire of my heart is accomplished.

If indeed temptation came upon me, at first, from the notion that I should be found *eloquent*—has the experience of a year as a Deacon taught me, that it is only the Spirit of God who can touch the heart; and that the most learned discourse, or attractive gift of utterance, is unavailing, where grace is not bestowed, to make the work prosper?

Could I expect *ease* in such a calling as the Ministry? While there is sin in every man's mind, while for every soul account must be given, while the Minister of Christ must set himself against all sin, where

could there be room for *ease?* Can I find *ease* in reproving the drunkard, the Sabbath breaker, the fornicator? Can I find *ease* in unmasking the hypocrite, reconciling the quarrelsome, showing meekly the danger of schism, or warning the rich man against the love of the world? Can I dream of such seclusion in a country village, as affording ease on earth, while fighting the fight of faith for God? Every heart is a little world, and a fallen one; and with each, the messenger of God must deal, if he would be found faithful to Him that called him. Have I not to provide instruction for the congregation? and does not this require time, and prayer, and reflection? Must not the school be daily visited? Are not the sick to be sought for, and the troubled in conscience to be soothed, and the necessitous to be relieved? Was our Divine Master's a life of *ease?* Were the Apostles to be seen seeking after *ease?* When even a door is opened, are there not many enemies? is not the warfare to be accomplished? And is not Satan gone forth, "knowing that he hath

"but a short time"—and then, "the king-
"doms of the world shall become the king-
"doms of the Lord and of His Christ."
"Even so, come Lord Jesus."

PRAYER.

O MERCIFUL GOD, who hast called an elect Church out of the world, and appointed that in earthen vessels the treasures of thy grace should be contained, give unto thy servant such divine help, that I may have a good hope that Thou hast called me to this Office, for serving thy Church, and wilt render me a minister of good unto others. O Lord, if worldly motive hath been mingled with desires of serving Thee herein, cleanse the vessel of my heart from this time. Teach me to drink of thy Son's cup willingly, and to be baptized with the baptism that He was baptized withal. And let me not seek great things for myself, but love to be little known, and hidden from men. Lord, make me to remember Him who went about doing good, and to follow His steps,

instead of seeking a false peace and worldly ease. Root out of my heart all vain glory —and teach me to feel that I am nothing, and can do nothing, but what thou shalt ordain for me. And thus "forgetting the "things which are behind, and reaching "forth unto those things which are before," may I be enabled to act purely for the glory of God, singly and sincerely for the salvation of souls, and seek only that *rest* which Thou hast promised to all them that come labouring and heavy laden unto Thee, through Jesus Christ.

MEDITATION VIII.

The Bishop.

"ARE you persuaded that the holy Scrip- "tures contain sufficiently all Doctrine re- "quired of necessity for eternal salvation "through faith in Jesus Christ? and are "you determined, out of the said Scrip- "tures, to instruct the people committed to "your charge, and to teach nothing, as re-

"quired of necessity to eternal salvation, "but that which you shall be persuaded "may be concluded and proved by the "Scripture?

"*Answer.* I am so persuaded, and have "so determined by God's grace."

How great need have all to pray that they may be built up on the foundation of divine truth! How great the necessity, that the Minister of Christ should teach *that* only for truth which can be traced to the eternal source, and which has been witnessed to as the truth, by the voice of the Church, from the times of the Apostles! Blessed be God for the assured knowledge that each book was tested by the searching inquiry of those who had authority to pronounce it canonical; and the evidence sealed at the hand (as we may justly believe) of the Beloved Disciple. May I ever regard the entire *message* as coming from God, and humbly recognise the *interpretation* of it, in the collective and established testimony of Christ's Church; and rejoice in the thought of His will being once for all delivered to the saints.

It has been my high privilege, not only to read the Scriptures for the edification of the people, but to preach the Word of God. And now that I am about to renew and enlarge my vows, how solemnly am I bound to examine my heart as to the manner in which I have discharged this duty! Did I always pray to be guided in the choice of my subject, and in the preparation of it; and to be so blessed in the faithful delivery of it, that the seed should not fail, but bring forth fruit abundantly? Though all have not equal gifts of utterance and persuasiveness, yet all are bound to remember that preaching is a work belonging to God's service; and that whether instruction be imparted by writing, or without—faithful preparation should be carefully employed, and the cry of implicit faith accompany the ministration of God's word. It is the want of combined Faith, and Prayer, and Diligence that causes so little good to be effected by sermons. Have I never so delayed my work herein, as to be hurried at the last, and thus be forced to put forth an undigested heap of

remarks? Have I ever, through misapplication of time, been a mere transcriber of other men's labours? Would it not have been better to have enriched my own mind as well as that of others by abridging, or expanding the learned writings of former divines? Above all, have I been drawing from the well of Salvation? Have I not given way to fanciful exposition, instead of earnestly endeavouring to grasp the exact truth, and apply it to the conscience? It is my privilege to read the Word in the very language which the Lord has chosen for conveying His divine will; and it should be my care always to refer to the original in the study of the *text*. With what holy plainness, and love, and earnestness, and close arrangement does the Saviour exhibit His sacred lessons in the recorded sermons of the Gospels! "The "common people heard Him gladly," while the wisest and most learned are ever far from penetrating into the depths of His thoughts. Had I more frequently *expounded* Scripture, instead of delivering a sort of rambling oration, oftentimes far

from the short text in its bearing, my hearers would have carried away more nourishment for their souls. Had I preached with simplicity and fervour, instead of trying to utter something showy and striking, I should have been nearer the pattern of Him who "spake as never man spake." I am fearful that I have often failed, even when trying to be plain, by addressing the mere understanding. Surely I ought not to forget that affections and passions are given us to drive forwards the vessel of the soul. Does not our Lord appeal to *Pity* in the parable of the good Samaritan? to *Hope* in that of the Prodigal? to *Fear* in that of the Ten Virgins? Who can read the calm, solemn, awful description of the Last Day from His lips, and not find one's very soul moved by apprehension of being driven to the left hand, and by longings for being welcomed to the right! O that I may henceforth strive to be scriptural and plain, but zealous and affectionate, in delivering the message of God to fallen man! Could I see a person in peril of life, and tamely and indifferently

intimate his danger? Let Christ be all in all in my teaching; let Him be exalted as the divine Guide, the atoning Mediator—the loving Saviour—the living source of strength, and He will prosper His own cause.

PRAYER.

Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom, who hast given thy command to "preach the Word," and hast promised to be with thy Church in all her ministrations, even to the end of the world, by the presence of thy dear Son, and the light of thy Holy Spirit, teach me, at all times, to remember that I bear a Commission from Thee; and that, although I may plant, and another may water, Thou, even Thou alone, canst give the increase. May I be ready in season, and out of season, to reprove, to rebuke, to exhort, with all long-suffering and with all doctrine. May thy will, as revealed in thy Word, be found, at my lips, to bring before men the Lord Jesus, as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Let me ever cleave unto Thee as the only

giver of help and grace, through our blessed Saviour, Jesus Christ.

O Almighty God, who by thy Son Jesus Christ didst give to thy Apostle, St. Peter, many excellent gifts, and commandedst him earnestly to feed thy flock, make, we beseech Thee, all Bishops and Pastors diligently to preach thy Word, and the people obediently to follow the same, that they may receive the crown of everlasting glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

There is another mode of preaching which I fear that I, as well as others, have not sufficiently regarded, *catechising*. And yet how imperatively is it required by the Church! how profitable is it found, wherever faithfully adopted! Gladly have I observed the interest taken by the parents during catechetical instruction; the eagerness of the young to give the right answer; the attention so well sustained in compa-

rison with the listlessness so often witnessed during sermons. However faulty in this matter hitherto, I will be so no more, whensoever the power shall be in my hand for establishing this excellent ordinance. Sure I am that, in a course of catechising, I shall be able to explain many terms, and impress the real meaning of expressions, for which the unbroken instruction of the pulpit does not afford opportunity. Justification, regeneration, renewing, conversion, faith—to many, these all-important expressions convey no adequate notion of truth. At these seasons I can set forth the true nature of the two Sacraments and the constitution of the Church, and the office of the Ministry, and the varied means of grace. Much information, in this mode, shall I be enabled to impart on the Jewish Ritual in itself, and in connexion with the Christian Dispensation. How interesting to many, debarred of other access, may the instruction here rendered be found on the formation, progress, and hindrances of the early Church;

and the holy characters who laboured and died in her cause! Have we not good example of the perfection to which the system of catechising has been carried in the learning of St. Clement, Origen, St. Cyril! Why should so valuable a part of our system be suffered to fall into comparative disuse; or be confined to a dry and formal hearing of the catechism for a few Sundays in Lent? The very fact of the scholar's mind becoming active in this exercise, instead of passively receiving instruction, is sufficient to recommend it for healthiness of spirit; and I trust, with God's help, to clarify my own mind, while setting forth before the people the entire truth in order and symmetry.

In many a scattered parish, outlying hamlets are several miles from the church. And in these remote corners there will be, I am aware, old and infirm people, to whom the "Cottage Lecture" will prove an inestimable boon. May I never shrink from labour in thus preaching the Gospel to every creature under my charge! May

His pattern be ever before me, who "went "into every village teaching the glad "tidings of the kingdom!"

And, in visiting from house to house, I would seek the divine blessing on my endeavours, not only on the more solemn occasions of sickness, affliction, and death, in the family, but in ordinary visits, to give a wholesome tone to what is passing in conversation. And sometimes a salutary turn to the discourse may be gracefully introduced by him that watches for good. For I have need, as a Minister of Christ, above other men, to keep the door of my lips, and to pray that my words may be seasoned with grace. If this be hard to observe in the poor man's house, it is doubly hard in what is called *society*. And continual prayer, for realizing the presence of God, should make me careful, while entirely unartificial in address, to keep our Lord's example in mind. May I ever think of Him as He appears at the table of friends and of enemies; guiding the thoughts of those before Him, and dropping the word of comfort, or offering gentle and delicate

admonition to the guests at table, or to the suspicious host.

PRAYER.

O BLESSED SAVIOUR JESUS, who from day to day didst preach the Word of Truth, and feed the hungry soul with the meat that endureth unto everlasting life, grant me grace to give, as a faithful Steward, his portion to each in due season. And as Thou didst under the roof of Martha, and at the table of Simon, and at the house of Zaccheus, let fall thy gracious words for encouragement, for conviction, or for guidance, so teach me to be ever watchful in speaking to the heart of the weary, or raising the dull soul to higher things; that, at all times, and in all places, I may seek to sow the seed of thy word in the minds of them that hear me, with unwearied zeal, and holy simplicity, and godly wisdom, to thy honour and glory, O blessed Jesus. *Amen.*

MEDITATION IX.

The Bishop.

"WILL you then give your faithful dili-
"gence always so to minister the Doctrine
"and Sacraments, and the Discipline of
"Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and
"as this Church and Realm hath received
"the same, according to the Command-
"ments of God; so that you may teach
"the people committed to your Cure and
"Charge with all diligence to keep and
"observe the same?

Answer. "I will so do, by the help of
"the Lord."

I must not only use diligence, but *faithful* diligence. "Cursed be the man that "doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully," carries an awful sound to the thoughtful mind. What a wholesome lesson does the gay or busy world read us, of time given up, self-denial practised, labour of mind and body endured, to meet the capri-

cious demands of a perishing life! But these things in which I am called to minister have reference to ETERNITY. The Doctrine is the Lord's. The Sacraments are the blood and the water from Christ's pierced side. The Discipline of the Church must be in accordance with His will who ruleth over all from the beginning. Must I not fear, lest in treating such mysterious subjects of doctrine as the Trinity in Unity, the divine and human natures in one Christ, the free but sanctifying grace of the Comforter, the spiritual adoption, the life-giving presence of the Saviour in the Eucharist, I may at any time have fallen short of, or exceeded, or clouded, the exact truth as set forth in Revelation, and witnessed to by the Church? Were it not for the mercy of God in overruling the weakness of man, and graciously forbearing, when ignorance and error mingle with his services, who but must tremble in looking back over the instruction and conversation even of a single year, or day! "If "Thou, Lord, shouldst be extreme to mark "what has been done amiss, O Lord, who

"may abide it!" How fervently should I pray continually for clearer light; for unflinching courage in declaring the whole counsel of God; for consistency in setting forth the doctrines according to the analogy of faith! Never may my trumpet give an uncertain sound, through fear, or false conciliation. Never may I irritate or unsettle the mind of any by harshness of statement, or exaggeration of colouring. If an inspired Apostle could cry aloud, "Woe is me, if I preach not the "Gospel," must it not be a subject of anxious desire to keep nigh to the very spirit of divine Truth, lest it be said unto me from above, in holy displeasure, "I "have somewhat against Thee?"

PRAYER.

O Almighty God, who hast instructed thy holy Church with heavenly doctrine, give me grace that, being not like children carried away with every blast of vain doctrine, I may be established in the truth of thy holy Gospel, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

I have *pledged* myself to observe the *discipline* of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Church and realm hath received the same.

How minutely was the discipline of the Levitical law detailed, how fearfully enforced! The recollection of the judgments which overtook Uzzah, Nadab, Abihu, and others, should make me fear lest I at any time offend against the discipline of a spiritual Dispensation established on better promises. That a power of admission into the covenant of grace, and, no less, of exclusion from it, is entrusted to the hands of Christ's Ministers, none can doubt who reads the divine words: "Verily I say unto "you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth "shall be bound in heaven; whatsoever ye "shall loose on earth shall be loosed in "heaven." "Whose soever sins ye remit, "they are remitted unto them; and whose "soever sins ye retain, they are retained." "Lo, I am with you always even to the end "of the world." The words in administering Baptism—who dare depart from; or from those in celebrating the holy Com-

munion? Some rules must be gathered from the practice of the inspired Apostles, as that for the ordinance of Confirmation. Every Church is at liberty, while building solely on the one true foundation, to raise up its own code of sacred discipline. And our own Church has adhered with strict precision to the spirit of the Apostles as set forth in the Word of God, and in sweet harmony with the Primitive Church which followed their steps. Discipline is the hedge which guards the vineyard of the Lord; woe to him that in pride and self-sufficiency breaks down that protection, and makes a way for evil trespassers to enter! A path of safety lies before me in adhering to the spirit, and, as far as possible, to the very letter of the Rubric. But has it, in all cases, been hitherto my aim to observe the discipline, and obey the regulations of the Church in which I have been appointed to minister? Have I ever, through vain glory, sought to introduce novelties; or, through fear of man, shrunk from enforcing what is purely Catholic? Have I honoured, or disregarded, the Festi-

vals and Fasts as appointed by the Church, and suffered these services to be a dead letter, when I had the power of celebrating them? Have I baptized "*in a corner*," instead of ministering that holy Sacrament in the congregation? Have I neglected to urge frequency of attendance at that eucharistic Sacrifice, which in the early Church was offered on *every* Lord's Day, and in some Churches daily? Have I, through wretched cowardice of heart, or indifference to souls, let the open transgressor eat and drink a judgment on himself, when I might have hindered it; or allowed sponsors to answer for the souls of others, who had no care for their own? Or have I admitted an adult without due preparation, not remembering that even the gifts of mercy and free grace are conditional? Without insisting on confession of sin to the Priest as essential to pardon, for which there is no scriptural authority, or warrant in our Church, it is his high privilege to pronounce the moral leper clean, and to give assurance of remission to the troubled conscience. How careful ought I to be,

when this power is confided, in discharging this tremendous trust, lest I encourage where conviction is more needed! But when the solemn words of Ordination have been addressed to me, unworthy as I am, by the Lord Himself at the lips of His minister, let me be bold in maintaining herein the discipline of the Church. If David found peace, on the prophet Nathan declaring, "the Lord hath put away thy "sin," I need not fear exercising my trust herein in the name of the Lord as present. The Son of Man hath power, on earth, to forgive sins. His Divine presence is not less with us, because He sitteth at the right of the Father, in exercising the plenitude of His mercy, than when He spake, with His own voice, the precious words—"Thy "sins be forgiven." When I hear the desire of the Church in the opening of the Lent Services for the restoration of godly discipline, let my prayer ever be that I may be earnest in this matter. For so long a period has wholesome discipline been neglected, that opposition will be commonly excited whensoever any attempt

is made to recover the ground which has been lost. Am I resolved, however, in the strength of the Lord, to do all in the spirit of meekness and gentleness? Far from lording it over God's heritage, may I entreat where I have a right to enjoin; and wait patiently for a time, that I may more securely succeed in the end; and beseech, in cases where just authority might threaten. Never may I forget how great my own sin has been; how grievous my own infirmity of heart; and that it is of the Lord's mercy that I have not myself perished before Him.

PRAYER.

O Almighty God, terrible in wrath, yet in compassion infinite, teach me to adore that inscrutable ordinance of Heaven, whereby sinful man is appointed to minister forgiveness, and to convey grace in thy name, and to execute thy judgment on creatures fallen like unto himself. Dispose my heart to be meek and merciful, considering lest I also myself be tempted. Willingly may I turn again and pray with

those who, having disobeyed Thee, desire reconciliation. Let thy servant be humbled, and not puffed up by such a mysterious trust. Give me holy courage in dealing with the impenitent, no less than tenderness in welcoming the contrite. And in this and all other duties may I look unto Thee, through Him, the Judge, the Mediator, the Saviour, for wisdom and loving-kindness to execute mine office, even Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

MEDITATION X.

The Bishop.

"WILL you be ready, with all faithful "diligence, to banish and drive away all "erroneous and strange doctrines contrary "to God's word; and to use both public "and private monitions and exhortations, "as well to the sick as to the whole, within "your Cures, as need shall require, and "occasion shall be given?

"*Answer.* I will, the Lord being my "helper."

If the enemy sowed tares among the wheat, when the Divine Sower Himself went forth to sow; if, while the inspired Apostles lived and taught, false teachers went about, diffusing their pernicious errors, can I expect to see the Church in our day untainted by strange doctrines? Did our blessed Master so come as to send peace upon earth? We know that there must be divisions of opinion, stumbling-blocks, oppositions of science, falsely so called. Our Church has, in several authoritative formularies, defined the great objective truths of the Gospel, in close adherence to the primitive traditional interpretation of Scripture. From these I feel that I dare not depart, as being a pure and sanctioned exhibition of the Divine mind and will. My office binds me to set these forth as the transcript and summary of Revelation. Instead of seeking to discover new doctrines, or novel phases of acknowledged truth, may the good Lord inspire me with a lowly desire

to inquire for the good old paths, and walk therein stedfastly. But I must do more. The Divine command has gone forth, "con-"tend earnestly for the faith once delivered "to the saints." From the pulpit I would avoid controversy. The surest way to repress error is to promulgate the truth in all its fulness. The good Lord enable me so to do in a spirit of love! We are beset by emissaries of a Church, with which we are not in communion, because she has corrupted the Doctrine, and Discipline, and Sacraments. But shall I not most effectually oppose a false tradition, by preaching Holy Scripture as the only foundation of faith; and inculcating from this, the spiritual worship due to God *alone*, the duty of searching the Scriptures, the peace of Paradise as *immediate* after the death of the faithful, the sufficiency of the *two* Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself? May I not safely leave, as a separate office, that of the controversialist, to such as are blessed with learned leisure; and in the House of God seek to nourish the soul with words of guidance, consolation, and

love? Is it not but too true, that ofttimes, in polemical preaching, the objections are remembered, and the answers forgotten? How long, O holy Lord, shall these distractions disturb the peace of the Church? Thy kingdom come!

Again, in opposing error in Protestant dissent, on the constitution of the Church, the Ministry, and other points, shall I not more effectually do good by avoiding controversial statements, and, in charitable forbearance, declaring from Scripture the nature and government of the Church, the mystery and efficaciousness of the holy Sacraments, the relative position of faith and spiritual obedience, without seeming to undervalue either? But, above all, let me remember that love is the fulfilling of the law; and do Thou, O blessed Lord, teach me to be gentle in spirit; to pray for those being set right whom I must believe, in some degree, to be in error; and to await that day when, at thy second coming, "there shall be one fold and one "Shepherd."

PRAYER.

O MOST GRACIOUS GOD, whom truly to know is everlasting life, who hast revealed Thyself by Prophets and Apostles, and by thy dear Son Jesus Christ, enable me to discern the truth myself, and to impart that truth in all its purity and fulness to others. Preserve me from a severe, contentious spirit. While I am careful to drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine, may I be deeply impressed with a consciousness of my own ignorance and weakness; and show that love and tenderness to others, of which I so greatly stand in need myself. And may I long for, and prepare continually for, that blessed state in which unity and peace shall encircle all the saints in thy kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

MEDITATION XI.

My vow binds me further, "To use both "public and private monitions and exhort- "ations, as well to the sick as to the "whole, within my Cure, as need shall "require, and occasion be given."

I know from experience, even as a Deacon, how hard this part of my sacred duty is. How varied are the characters we have to deal with in a single round of parochial labour! The wealthier classes are often unapproachable. The poor are ignorant, and sometimes prejudiced and mercenary. In how different a tone have I to address the proud, the sensual, the formal, the hypocrite, the unbeliever, the timid, the excitable, the disturbed in mind, the scrupulous conscience! If possible, I would let no single day pass without a visit to my schools, and to some of my elder parishioners. Have I not been often to blame in neglecting these pastoral visits; taking my pleasure, or forming excuses for

myself, as if the people should come to me, instead of my seeking them out? Or I have gone at inconvenient hours, forgetting that the poor man's time is his money; or I have not gone to the house as quickly as I should, on being sent for. On the other hand, I fear from their manner, that my visits have occasionally been too long, and needlessly frequent. I would be as *courteous* as possible, instead of entering abruptly like an officer of justice.

Blessed Saviour, never may I forget thy graciousness of manner at all times in entering the houses of those whom Thou didst condescend to visit; and never may I venture to cross a threshold without a prayer to Thee to prevent and overrule my visit to thy service and glory. When my thoughts are carried back to Thee, O Lord, I perceive how trifling and unimpressive my visit has often been; in no way marked by the spirit of a messenger of grace. And yet I must remember the infinite distance between my Lord and my unworthy self, and strive to be as simple and natural as possible. Temptation may arise as to my

conversing in too formal or mysterious a manner, or adopting too much of a preaching tone; or, on the contrary, being too familiar for one who comes to *inquire after the soul.* I must be careful lest, while offering encouragement, I create presumption. It is better, I know, as is the rule of the physician, always to be *prepared* for the case I am about to visit, and not do positive harm by sameness of prescription for differing patients. What an unction will it give to my visits, if I consider that, in a case of illness, any interview may be the last!

The infirm must be considered. When they cannot go to church, the church must be brought to them. While I may not unduly urge the reception of the holy Eucharist, I must watch my opportunity for setting before them this inestimable privilege. Equally must I guard against its being partaken of as a form, and as a charm. If I have the case of a notorious sinner, I must not smooth matters, and apply balm when I should be using the knife and the cautery. A merely *respecta-*

lle man must have his mind drawn off to eternal things. Until conviction of sin be established, and the heart led to look unto Jesus as the only name in which salvation is to be found, no step is gained in dealing with a soul. It is the mighty office of the Spirit to effect this change in the heart; but the instruction of the Pastor in monition or exhortation is often and graciously employed by the Divine Comforter as the instrument in thus bringing about conversion. What watchfulness is needed when the soul is awakened during illness, to bring such an one on to perfection! Let me not add to those instances in which, on the recovery of the sick, I have let the enemy snatch away the prey, for want of zeal and vigilance on my part!

PRAYER.

O Thou loving and Divine Physician of souls, my adorable Master Jesus, teach me to think of Thee in all thy wise and forbearing ways of drawing souls unto Thyself. On Thee may I meditate in

thy awakening, consoling, and stablishing course of grace, in dealing with the heart of man. On Thee may I depend for such support and governance as shall render me a blessing in rescuing souls from the thraldom of the evil one. Grant me the spirit of holy discretion, unswerving faithfulness, and infinite long-suffering, in discharging the awful task of dealing individually with those for whom thy precious blood was shed; that it be not shed in vain for any committed to my weak and unworthy hands. Magnify thy strength in my infirmity, thy wisdom in my foolishness, thy knowledge in my ignorance. Teach me to forget myself in the great work Thou hast given me to do; and to labour in bringing many souls unto Thee, that they may be saved in the day of the Lord. Even so, blessed Jesus. *Amen.*

MEDITATION XII.

Let me not forget, that I am bound to minister unto "the whole as well as the

"sick." With God's blessing *I will not be satisfied till I have gone into every house. All* are committed to the care of the Lord's steward. He must watch for souls as one that has to give account. Good Bishop Wilson recommended keeping a "Notitia Parochialis." This will give accuracy to my work, and afford me opportunity for *intercession for each, in turn.*

I must not think only of the poor. The rich and those in trade have souls to be saved or lost. Their temptations in some respects differ, but they are as severe and more perilous. I have seen, as a Deacon, how much harder it is to get at the minds of such than of the poor. Perhaps I have offended, in some cases, by want of delicacy and tact. I have known a foolish man, on being abruptly reproved, make a vow of never entering the church while such an one was minister. A more discreet appeal to the conscience, at the well-chosen moment, than that which, in youthful zeal, had been made, or by letter, may have been the means of a happy conversion, instead of proving a barrier in the

way of salvation. When the prophet Nathan sought to awaken David to a sense of his sin, he had recourse to a parable. Lord, if we would but seek thy guidance from Holy Scripture, and the teaching of thy Spirit, how often should we be saved from hurting thy cause by our folly and error! When Thou sendest affliction, losses, or death into a family, and the fallow ground is providentially broken up, then may we not hope to fall in with thy Divine purpose, in the employment of thy grace? A parent's heart is touched by interest shown by the Pastor in the children of a family; oftentimes an effectual door is opened at the approaching hour of a Confirmation. O! may I remember that I am to *watch*. The sentinel may not rest till his watch is over. Shall he that watcheth for souls be less earnest and devoted to the Captain of salvation that appointed him? To some I have incautiously appealed with words begetting fear, whose hopes should rather have been awakened; and thus have I "made the righteous sad, "whom the Lord made not sad." Others

have been too tenderly dealt with, who were making themselves vile, and I restrained them not. What need have I to pray for a right judgment in all things! How carefully should the *plan* of visiting for each day be formed and prayed over, before leaving home! Shall the earthly physician go beyond the Heavenly in these things? Many must be urged to press onwards as not having yet apprehended. All require being reminded to forget the things which are behind, and reach after those that are before; to grow in grace; to "add to their faith virtue; and to virtue "knowledge; and to knowledge temper-"ance; and to temperance patience; and "to patience godliness; and to godliness "brotherly kindness; and to brotherly "kindness charity."

My vow restricts my ministrations to those "within my own Cure." While I would not intrude into another man's labours, I cannot help being jealous of any interference with my own. And especially in the case of Ministers of another communion being encouraged in their attend-

ance, I should feel it the safest course for the person visited, that a choice of spiritual guidance be made, lest the mind be distracted by variety of teaching; and unsettledness in the faith at such an hour ensue. Daily may I examine myself as to ministerial duty, "lest after having "preached to others, I myself should be a "castaway." *The hardest portion of the parish to look after, is my own heart.* How necessary to search out my spirit, to counsel myself, to reprove myself, to judge myself impartially, and whatever discipline I practise on others, to enforce with all faithfulness on my own soul!

PRAYER.

O MOST HOLY GOD AND FATHER, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, who knowest how weak in ourselves we are, and how greatly we stand in need of thy continual support, fill me with grace abundant for my own wants and those of others. Enable me to build up those who are settled on the only true foundation; to assist them in going on to perfection; yea,

in striving to be perfect even as Thou, our Heavenly Father, art perfect. Thou, only, canst accomplish this in such creatures as we are; but Thou art more ready to hear than we to pray; and I beseech Thee to answer thy servant according to thy good pleasure herein; through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

MEDITATION XIII.

As one part of the vow succeeds another, the mind is led instinctively to meditate on the magnitude of the work, and the feebleness of the instrument. And it is quite a relief to be reminded, next, of the secure access which we have to the Lord of all, who heareth while we are yet speaking in prayer. "Will you be diligent in "prayers, and in reading of Holy Scrip- "ture, and in such studies as help to the "knowledge of the same, laying aside the "study of the world and the flesh?" Blessed Saviour, what a pattern didst Thou set of continual prayer! A whole

night at one time; rising up a great while before day at another; retiring to the mountain; entering the sacred garden! St. Paul, after his conversion, was three days in prayer and fasting; St. John was "in the Spirit on the Lord's Day." And the early Christians, like "Enoch, walked "with God." How often, even when engaged in prayer, have I been hurried and inconsiderate, and have not spread the matter before the Lord, closely and comprehensively in faith! Have I not forgotten to pray the Lord to prosper His work committed to my hands in preaching? Have I prayed as a form, without looking for an answer of grace? And in visits to the school, and from house to house, have I not felt and acted as if the work were my work, and not the Lord's? Would it not be a great help in kindling a devotional spirit (one of the great and grievous wants of our day) to follow the mind of the Primitive Church? As the Lord's resurrection is commemorated on Sunday, and His atonement on Friday, so would it be well for me to bear in mind

His betrayal on Wednesday; His ascension on Thursday; His lying in the grave on Saturday. And that nothing might be wanting to keep Jesus continually before me, to set apart Monday for remembrance of His birth in the flesh; and Tuesday, of His sending down the Comforter! We do not live nigh enough unto God. We suffer, nay, almost encourage the world to bring a cloud between us and our Heavenly Father, and rob us of His hallowed presence! How would it consecrate our daily acts, how would it join me in spirit with Angels and Archangels and all the company of Heaven, to be as they are, burning with devout adoration of spirit while calmly hasting, each one on his way, in the Divine employment of Heavenly service!

PRAYER.

Lord, teach me to pray with supplication and intercession and thanksgiving. Lift up my heart unto Thee, weighed down as it is by sins and weakness, and the pressure of an evil world. Make me to feel the joy, the honour, the peace arising from

approach to thy throne. If I cannot always feel fervour and satisfaction, never let me shrink from discharging my bounden duty herein, in seeking the face of the Lord. Though I be a worm and no man, though I be "but dust and ashes" before Thee, yet, Lord, for Jesus' sake, "who ever liveth "to make intercession for us," for His sake, cause the incense of Divine purification to cleanse the defilement of my unworthy petitions, and so help me in my conflict with the dulness of the flesh, that I may not "let Thee go until Thou bless "me" in Christ Jesus my Saviour.

Prayer fits us, under Divine teaching, for meditation on the Word. And God's Word disposes us for prayer. And sure I am that Holy Scripture is read to most advantage when we pray over that portion which we have been reading. Then does the Spirit "hide the Word in our heart, that we should not sin against God." Too apt are we not to recur to the sacred words that have been before us, but to let Satan snatch them from our hearts. Much better is it to read a small portion again

and again, and cause it to revolve in the mind till it is turned into a part of one's self. Thus is the armoury provided, from which the Spirit draws the right arrow of warning, comfort, governance, and makes us wise unto salvation.

PRAYER.

Lord, teach me so to "love thy Word, that "all the day long my study may be in it." Let thy testimonies be my counsellors, making me wiser than the aged. "O! "send forth thy light and thy truth, that "they may lead me and bring me to thy "holy hill and to thy dwelling." And may "the word of Christ dwell richly "within me—in psalms, and hymns, and "spiritual songs, making melody in my "heart, and leading me, whatsoever I do, "to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." *Amen.*

MEDITATION XIV.

NEVER may I forget again, what I fear that I have not sufficiently remembered, my vow to be "diligent in such *studies* as "help to the knowledge of Holy Scripture, "laying aside the study of the world and "the flesh."

Surely I dare not let a day pass, from this time, without studying a small portion, *at least*, of the New Testament in the original. I have felt the temptation to neglect this, and other studies, under the plea that parochial labour does not allow time. God forbid that I should neglect a single soul committed to my charge. But I came into the world to save my own soul. My soul is not safe, if vows be neglected. And I have *vowed* to be diligent herein. The interference of pastoral duty is a vain plea in most cases. To the early riser belong *sixteen* hours in the day. Can all these be so continually employed in care of the body, in preparation for

public service, and in discharge of ministerial duty, as to compel me to break a vow? If even one hour in the day be carefully devoted by me to my advance in Biblical and other accordant study, what a treasure of sound learning shall I have heaped up at the end of a single year! Can I find time for complimentary visits, pleasant excursions, the review, the newspaper, and pretend that I cannot find time for at least ten or twelve verses of the New Testament, digested with attention to the context, to parallel passages, to the force and bearing of the words in Greek, illustrated from classical writers? My heart will answer with more peace, in daily self-examination, if this rule be observed.

I would also bind myself always to refer to the text of my sermon in the original, for mistakes as to the meaning will often be prevented hereby. How many a period of ten minutes, how many quarters of an hour are wasted, which could be rescued by plan! Besides this indispensable regulation of daily advance in the Greek Testament, will not a Hebrew Psalm, a page

of St. Chrysostom or St. Augustine, a choice passage in Homer or Virgil, an ode of Horace, in these fragments of time, be advantageously studied? Let me not, when my last examination before man is over, be so faithless to my God as to dishonour His gifts of mind, His endowments of education, His favour in leading me to this position. Or, to take a lower ground, should the Bishop, in the exercise of his right, examine me, if presented for admission to a benefice, and reject me as an idler and incompetent, should I not merit this disgrace? I am sure that by determining to deny myself in going from home in the evening, I shall secure much precious time, not only for digesting my stock of study hitherto laid up, but I shall be enabled to enrich and enlarge my mind with portions from the Fathers, and the great divines of this and other lands. Nor should I hesitate, but feel it a duty, to refresh my spirits, at fitting hours, by works of a less deep but healthful character. And change of book is known always to bring recreation and rest to the mind.

By early rising I may command a portion of time by which the sluggard cannot benefit; and if, while yet youth and strength are mine, I begin the day even at six, I shall be only following the pattern of others who have learned to live for God rather than for themselves.

PRAYER BEFORE STUDY.

O Almighty God, who art in wisdom infinite, and boundless in Divine knowledge, I would humble myself before Thee for having hitherto so imperfectly used thy gifts bestowed upon me as a reasonable creature. Blessed be thy name for having borne with my neglect in a course of education which, but for my indolence, might have been so much more profitable. O Lord, implant in me a hearty desire for knowing Thee in thy Word and in thy works. Teach me to feel that no study can prosper save that which Thou dost bless; but that every moment consecrated to thy service herein is accepted before Thee in Christ. *Amen.*

PRAYER.

GRACIOUS FATHER, keep before me the example of thy blessed Son, who worked the works of Him that sent Him while it was day. Call forth within me a spirit of diligence and patient labour, a strict watchfulness over my time; a fervent desire for improving the talent committed unto my charge. And whereinsoever, O Lord, it may please Thee, through thy Holy Spirit, to grant me success in sacred studies, or helps to the same, in deep humility may I ascribe all to Thee, my Heavenly Father and God of all mercy, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen.*

MEDITATION XV.

"THOU hast made me keeper of the vine-"yard; but mine own vineyard have I not "kept." After calling on us to bind our spirit with faithful vows for the good of others, the Church demands of us a pledge

of watchfulness over ourselves. "Will you "be diligent to frame and fashion your "own selves, and your families, according "to the Doctrine of Christ; and to make "both yourselves and them, as much as in "you lieth, wholesome examples and pat- "terns to the flock of Christ?" And the earnest answer is—"I will apply myself "thereto, the Lord being my helper."

How careful should I be to govern my household, however small, in the ways of piety, order, pureness, charity, peace, and diligence! Can I deem myself a follower of the Lord Jesus, if there be wanting unaffected simplicity and godly self-denial? Shall I, who have taken up the Cross by profession, be found attempting to vie with men of the world in the regulation and appearance of my establishment[1]? Am I not bound to retrench my expenditure in every possible way, that I may be helpful in furthering the cause of the Gospel abroad and at home, and succouring the needy?

The same holy man advises that a clergy-

[1] G. Herbert. The Country Parson in his House.

man be rather unmarried than married. The Word of God, however, declares, "Every man hath his gift." There are inspired directions for the character of the wives of ministers; and St. Paul himself claims his right, without exercising it, to lead about a Christian wife. Doubtless there are situations, as well as seasons, in the Christian Church, in which celibacy is not only the higher duty, but the less distracting course. And it cannot be too solemnly remembered that we, above all men, are not our own. The first consideration for us at all times should be the glory of God; the last, how "to please ourselves." And the prayer of faith must be incessant, that God would so overrule our path, as most effectually to serve His Divine purpose and honour. A pastor's wife should resemble the Deaconess of early times,—she should be, as G. Herbert describes, chosen by his ear rather than his eye. She is either religious, or night and day he is winning her to it, &c. (vid. Country Parson.)

May I seek a blessing in training my servants for a Heavenly life while govern-

ing them wisely in my household. It will be better to bear long with a servant than to be often changing. Temptation, on the other hand, may arise from morbid reluctance to reprove. While I would be kind in word, and gracious in manner, I would be reserved in deportment. O Lord, may thy Apostle's warning ever be in my ears: "If a man know not how to rule his own "house, how shall he govern the Church of "God!" The Lord give me sound understanding and holy faithfulness, that by my own example, and that of my household, I may be in God's hands a light to lighten the rest of my parish. What need have I to shrink at the thought of setting up myself and mine as examples! But out of weakness the Lord can make us strong. And if I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me; if Christ will deign to live in me, and manifest the working of His Spirit in turning me from darkness to light, and making me meet for His Heavenly kingdom, I may thus hope to show forth His grace working in me mightily, and conforming me to

His own mind, and enabling me to say, "I will tell you what God hath done for "my soul."

PRAYER.

O MOST HOLY LORD GOD, Thou art perfect in all truth and righteousness, in mercy and goodness. Who am I, O Lord, that I should take upon myself to teach others, and presume to set forth myself and mine as examples to others? O Lord, if the blind lead the blind, shall they not both fall into the ditch? O Thou who by a mighty grace didst endue Moses, and the Prophets, and the Apostles with abundant gifts, and didst manifest almighty power in showing forth thy marvellous mercy in the conversion of the soul, making new creatures of men of like passions with ourselves, enable me so to walk before Thee in thy strength, that the sheep may follow in the safe paths of the good Shepherd, to thy honour and glory, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

MEDITATION XVI.

Thou, O blessed Jesus, wast foreshown as "the Prince of Peace." Of Thee it was declared that Thou "shouldest not strive "nor cry, nor any one hear thy voice in "the streets." And shall not thy messengers of grace follow after peace with all men, as taught by thy Divine example? Our Church, in the spirit of the Lord, demands then of us, before we partake of the Priesthood, "Will you maintain and "set forwards, as much as lieth in you, "quietness, peace, and love, among all "Christian people, and especially among "them that are or shall be committed to "your charge?" And the answer is—"I "will do so, the Lord being my helper."

In order to this, I will be very watchful over my temper. An overseer of souls must not be soon angry. There are cases in which we may be angry and not sin. But the cause must be just. The expression of wrath must not be unseemly; nor

the continuance excessive. How shall I speak of meekness and gentleness from the pulpit, if I be known in my family or parish as a hasty, fretful, passionate man? or, even worse, if I seem good-tempered abroad, but am rough, ungracious, and sharp at home? A patient and forbearing spirit may be coupled with the most decided energy and most undaunted courageousness of mind. Gentleness must not sink into imbecility. Anger should not rise into ferocity.

I must watch against parochial disputes. In the meetings in a parish, command of temper is of the greatest importance, and never may I venture into these assemblies without fervent prayer for calmness, forbearance, and decision. May my mind always realize the presence of the Most High, and recur to that Holy One, who, in the midst of violent and ensnaring enemies, often disarmed malignity by the benign patience of His spirit and behaviour. The wily Sadducee is taught a great truth, when he hoped to have confounded the Lord. The proud Pharisee is silenced,

when aiming at the very life of the Redeemer. Nor will I, God helping me, be induced to disturb the working of grace in my parish, by officiously meddling in politics. True, that I do not forfeit my privilege as a citizen, by receiving my Commission in the sacred ministry of the Church; nor become insensible to patriotism, or callous to feelings of loyalty, on being ordained. But it is one thing, to form and hold my opinions; another, to become a political partisan, a hustings' orator. What if I imperil a single soul, by opposition or adherence to party! But especially let me abhor the thought of rising to wealth or dignity by political servitude. Could a spiritual charge be expected to prosper, which was obtained by succumbing under such worldly prostration of mind?

Among my brethren in the ministry, I would seek to dwell with a loving spirit. Differences of opinion there may be, there must be. The truth, as obtained from the view of Scripture taken by an individual, I am not bound by. The authoritative ex-

position of the Word of God by the Church, I cannot flinch from avowing. This I cannot soften or dilute, in order to promote a false harmony. I must be true to God, before I can think of propitiating man. "First pure, then peaceable." But should I not be guilty, if I imagine myself called on to contend with all from whom I may differ? Shall I impute wrong motives, call harsh names, or retaliate, when unkind insinuations are thrown out against my views and course of proceeding? Even in the case of those who have separated themselves from our branch of the Church, although I dare not authenticate their religious community by association in worship, or connivance, inasmuch as I am taught to regard their position as one of error, yet, even to these, mistaken brethren in Christ as I must regard them, I can be courteous: for them I can pray, and I would not be guilty of an uncharitable feeling on any occasion against such.

Nor must I forget that important part of the vow, which requires me to reconcile those who are at enmity. I know how

much delicacy and prudence are requisite oftentimes in restoring peace among neighbours, in recovering lost harmony in households, in softening parental displeasure against an extravagant son, or wayward daughter—or perhaps (most difficult case) bringing together the alienated hearts of husband and wife. There are some instances in which I may be compelled to hold out the terrific threat of removal from the Table of the Lord. Though I may have much to bear in these perplexing trials, yet, if I can in any instance carry out the blessed object of the everlasting Gospel, as proclaimed by rejoicing angels at the Divine nativity,—"on earth peace,"—I shall be more than recompensed; and I know that my God, who is the author of peace and lover of concord, will supply me with the help of the Spirit, for Jesus' sake.

PRAYER.

O BLESSED JESUS, the Prince of Peace, who didst come down from Heaven to restore lost man to his offended Lord, and didst pray that all thy disciples might be

one, as the Father is one with Thee—pour into my weak and sinful soul the love of Peace. Grant unto me the spirit of wisdom and charity, that I may not only give no offence myself, but turn the hearts of the fathers to the children. Inspire me with grace from above, to soften all angry feelings among those committed to my charge, and so to reconcile contrariant minds, that they may cast away all displeasure, and dwell in blessed harmony before Thee, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost art one God, world without end.

MEDITATION XVII.

Few things would, I believe, tend more to the peace and security of the Church, than a spirit of holy subordination. In this habit are comprised humility, reverence, and meekness of temper. Justly does the Church demand of me—"Will you reve-"rently obey your Ordinary, and other "chief Ministers, unto whom is committed "the charge and government over you;

" following with a glad mind and will their " godly admonitions, and submitting your- " self to their godly judgments?" And am I prepared to answer from my heart —" I will do so, the Lord being my " helper?" After such a pledge, shall I not be slow in calling in question the wisdom, and injunctions laid on me, of my superiors, before conforming to their will? If I be satisfied that the requirements put forth do not infringe the spirit of godliness—this being secured, I am surely bound to submit my will to theirs. The Bishop and his delegates do not make the laws which are binding on the Church. They simply interpret and execute them. But is it not more Christian to endure even under unjust treatment, than to oppose and revile?

" What glory is it, if when ye be buffeted " for your faults, ye take it patiently? but if " when ye do well and suffer for it, ye be " evil entreated and bear it patiently, this " is acceptable with God: for even hereunto " were ye called: because Christ also suffered " for us, leaving us an example that ye " should follow his steps."

I may use my Christian liberty in the selection of channels of beneficence, for the glory of God, and the spreading of His Gospel, without violating my vow of submission. But if I am required by my Bishop to restore some neglected usage commanded by the Church, or to desist from some practice at variance with the Rubric, I cannot satisfy my conscience in disobeying, and setting up my own will against righteous authority. Does it not put one to shame to see how, in earthly professions, subordination is observed; while among the ministers of a Heavenly calling, it is frequently disregarded? Are we not taught, that even amongst Angels and Archangels there is gradation of rank, and loving acquiescence? And shall I ever forget, that God is the God of order, and that in obeying, I am obeying God rather than man? Blessed Saviour, may thy holy meekness before Pilate and the rulers of Israel, thy righteous observance of all precepts upon earth, be ever present to my mind, and be my guide and support. To behold the eternal Son of God, in our flesh,

obeying and submitting under grievous provocation, may well bow my stubborn neck to the yoke imposed on me. But weak and wayward as fallen creatures are, what need have I to pray for myself continually, as the Bishop on the day of Ordination prays—"Almighty God, who hast "given me the will to do all these things, "grant me also strength and power to per- "form the same; and accomplish this "work which Thou hast begun in me, "through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

MEDITATION XVIII.

How touching is that part of the Ordination Service in which the Bishop desires the congregation secretly to offer up their prayers for those to be ordained; and silence, for some space of time, is kept for such intercession! Does it not bring to one's mind that solemn expression in the Apocalypse—"And when he had opened

"the seventh seal, there was silence in "heaven about the space of half an hour?" What a moment is that for the congregation, and for the ministers of Christ! Every heart, we may trust, is engaged in devout supplication for the inexperienced, embarking on so perilous a voyage. The prayers of one will be, for the minister of Christ to be zealous; those of another, for his being discreet; of another, for our seeking the glory of God and not our own; of another, for our success in gathering souls to life eternal. Perhaps the Bishop's prayer, as best knowing the difficulty of the work before us, will be—that we may not make shipwreck of our own souls while seeking to rescue others. At length, when the sacred silence is broken by the soft and plaintive chant, how does the heart rise to the Holy Comforter in those deep and simple words, which we cannot too often, at other times, present at the Throne of Grace, when we are walking by the way, or sitting down, or rising up!

Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
And lighten with celestial fire.
Thou the anointing Spirit art,
Who dost thy sevenfold gifts impart.

Thy blessed Unction from above,
Is comfort, life, and fire of love.
Enable with perpetual light
The dulness of our blinded sight.

Anoint and cheer our soiled face
With the abundance of thy grace.
Keep far our foes, give peace at home:
Where Thou art guide, no ill can come.

Teach us to know the Father, Son,
And Thee, of both, to be but One.
That, through the ages all along,
This may be our endless song;

Praise to thy eternal merit,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

MEDITATION XIX.

The Bishop's Prayer.

"ALMIGHTY GOD, and Heavenly Father,
"who, of thine infinite love and goodness

"towards us, hast given to us thy only and
"most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ, to
"be our Redeemer, and the Author of
"everlasting life; who, after He had made
"perfect our redemption by His death,
"and was ascended into heaven, sent
"abroad into the world His Apostles, Pro-
"phets, Evangelists, Doctors, and Pastors;
"by whose labour and ministry He gathered
"together a great flock in all the parts of
"the world, to set forth the eternal praise
"of thy holy Name: For these so great
"benefits of thy eternal goodness, and for
"that Thou hast vouchsafed to call these
"thy servants here present to the same
"Office and Ministry appointed for the
"salvation of mankind, we render unto
"Thee most hearty thanks, we praise and
"worship Thee; and we humbly beseech
"Thee, by the same thy blessed Son, to
"grant unto all, which either here or else-
"where call upon thy holy Name, that we
"may continue to shew ourselves thankful
"unto Thee for these and all other thy
"benefits; and that we may daily increase
"and go forwards in the knowledge and

"faith of Thee and thy Son, by the Holy "Spirit. So that as well by these thy "Ministers, as by them over whom they "shall be appointed thy Ministers, thy holy "Name may be for ever glorified, and thy "blessed kingdom enlarged; through the "same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who "liveth and reigneth with Thee in the "unity of the same Holy Spirit, world "without end. *Amen.*"

A prayer it is that calls for my devoutest Meditation. What an appeal is made to the love of our Heavenly Father! How can I estimate such mercy as that which sent the eternal Son, the willing ransom, clad in the nature of His enemies, but without sin, to be our Redeemer? Hath God reconciled this world at such a cost as the atoning death of His beloved Son, and superadded the sanctifying graces of the life-giving Spirit, and made sinful man the bearer of the evangelic tidings, the conveyancer of the mysterious gifts; and shall I not be willing to cry, "Here am I; "send me?" Send me, but fit me for the work, O Lord, before Thou sendest me.

Thou wilt not withhold thy all-enabling grace. Hast Thou enjoined the smiting of the rock, and wouldest Thou, then, forbid the stream to flow? Although the outward miracle ceaseth, doth not thy hand, O Lord, daily work marvels of grace? Doth it not come from Thee that, in the ministration of man, the spiritually blind are made to see the value of the salvation wrought, and look unto Jesus? Is it not from Thee that the moral leper even now is cleansed, and the lame are taught to walk in the right way, and the deaf to hearken unto the things that make for their peace?

Nor let my faith fail in the enumeration of the Divine offices, as to the constituted orders of Bishop, Priest, and Deacon. Whatever was extraordinary has passed away. But the shadow, in this as in other things, found its embodiment under the fulness of the Gospel; and in all its progress, through enemies from within and from without, Christ is with His Church, even unto the end of the world. Fervently may I join in thanksgiving for all the mer-

cies of the Heavenly message; for the sanction and labours of the ministry. And may I never cease to pray for myself and others called to such an honour, that we may daily increase and go forwards in the knowledge of God, the Father, His Son, and Spirit. By me, thine unworthy servant, and by them over whom I may be appointed to minister, may thy name be for ever glorified, and thy blessed kingdom enlarged, through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, world without end.

PRAYER.

O Lord God Almighty, infinite in holiness, perfect in all truth and love and wisdom and goodness, create in me the desire of growing in grace, and then satisfy me with the richness of thy gifts herein. O my God, I am content, if left to myself, to go on in weakness and deadness of heart, not seeking to run the way of thy commandments, but too ready to settle down in slothfulness of spirit and

unavailing laments over my backward condition before Thee. O Lord, stir up the will of thy unworthy servant, that I, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of Thee be plenteously rewarded, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

MEDITATION XX.

RUBRIC.

When this Prayer is done, the Bishop with the Priests present shall lay their hands severally upon the head of every one that receiveth the Order of Priesthood; the Receivers humbly kneeling upon their knees, and the Bishop saying,

"RECEIVE the Holy Ghost for the Office "and Work of a Priest in the Church of "God, now committed unto thee by the "Imposition of our hands. Whose sins "thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and "whose sins thou dost retain, they are re-"tained. And be thou a faithful Dispenser "of the Word of God, and of His holy

"Sacraments; In the Name of the Father,
"and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
"*Amen.*"

RUBRIC.

Then the Bishop shall deliver to every one of them kneeling, the Bible into his hand, saying,

"Take thou Authority to preach the
"Word of God, and to minister the holy
"Sacraments in the Congregation, where
"thou shalt be lawfully appointed there-
"unto."

When Moses was about to depart, he laid his hands on Joshua, and in the name of the Lord gave him a commission. I see the Apostles observing the same practice in setting apart their successors in the Episcopate, and in ordaining Presbyters and Deacons. Can I reflect without the deepest awe on the solemn words by which laying on of hands is in our Church accompanied? "Receive the Holy Ghost
"for the office and work of a Priest," &c.

"Receive the Holy Ghost." I do not by these words imagine any miraculous

endowment conveyed. But I do from my heart believe that a special gift of the Holy Ghost is imparted. I believe an authority to be granted from the Lord, as present, to act in His name, and communicating efficacy to the means of grace ministered by those hereby set apart. Is it not, by this Presence with His ministers, that Baptism becomes the seal of the covenant, and the seed of new life? Is it not the gift of the Holy Ghost which, at our unworthy hands, renders the Eucharist, to the believer, the spiritual Body and Blood of Christ? Does not our right arise from this Commission, to intercede in the congregation, to bless, to forgive in the name of the Lord? Too deeply my mind cannot be impressed with the thought, that it is only the Presence of the Saviour which gives effect and reality to all that we speak and do. If I exercise faith there is no difficulty. It is only when in my weakness I shut out the Lord from the immediate superintendence of His own Church that my mind feels unable to grasp the mighty truth. I can comprehend how the delega-

tion of sovereign authority to the judge in an earthly kingdom can remand to prison, can consign to death. And it is only blindness to the close connexion between the visible and the unseen world which makes faith to stagger. "Lord, I believe: "help Thou mine unbelief." Even of Thee upon earth it was blasphemously demanded, Who can forgive sins, but God only? But Thou, blessed Saviour, art God. Thou didst say to thine Apostles, "As my Father hath "sent Me, even so send I you." "Whose "sins ye forgive, they are forgiven; whose "sins ye retain, they are retained." If Thou couldst seal a pardon because the Father sent Thee, they whom Thou dost send can at thy word also impart forgiveness to the penitent.

"Knowing, therefore, that when we take Ordination we also receive the presence of the Holy Ghost, partly to guide, direct, and strengthen us in all our ways, and partly to assume unto itself for the more authority those actions that appertain to our place and calling, can our ears admit such a speech uttered in the reverent per-

formance of that solemnity, or can we at any time renew the memory, and enter into serious cogitation thereof, but with much admiration and joy? Remove what these words, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost,' do imply, and what hath the ministry of God besides wherein to glory? ... Whereas now, forasmuch as the Holy Ghost, which our Saviour in His first Ordinations gave, doth no less concur with spiritual vocations throughout all ages, than the Spirit which God derived from Moses to them that assisted him in his government did descend from them to their successors in like authority and place, we have for the least and meanest duties performed by virtue of ministerial power, that to dignify, grace, and authorize them, which no other offices on earth can challenge. Whether we preach, pray, baptize, communicate, condemn, give absolution, or whatsoever, as disposers of God's mysteries; our words, judgments, acts, and deeds are not ours, but the Holy Ghost's[1]."

[1] Hooker, V. B. 77. 8.

I may surely feel that when Christ's minister refuses to admit to holy Baptism, or debars from the Table of the Lord, those who give no symptoms of genuine repentance—in his Master's name he passes the solemn sentence of exclusion; and if it be a just one, that which is bound on earth is bound in Heaven, as certainly as that which, under more favourable hopes, is loosed on earth shall be loosed in Heaven. In the absolution of the sick, the declaration is more imperative and decided. Man cannot know the heart. But if true contrition and genuine faith be within, the assurance of mercy is from the Lord, though spoken by the lips of man. With such a trust may I seek more and more to be a faithful dispenser of the Word of God, and of His holy Sacraments—in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. May the Spirit of God teach and enable me to be as faithful in keeping back the ungodly from profane approach to the Lord, as ready and joyful in welcoming the awakened, the contrite, the stedfast servant of Christ. Let the

world discredit these high claims of the Church. Not of man's power do they come. Not by human strength or authority are they ministered. The Lord hath spoken—"I am with you always, even unto "the end of the world."

In the Ordination of a Priest, the entire volume of inspiration is placed in the hands of the ordained. When I was commissioned a Deacon, I was reminded of the incompleteness of my mission, by the New Testament only being committed to me; and I was desired to await permission from the Bishop to preach. Now have I full liberty to go forth as the herald of Christ, and to cry aloud to all, both far and near, "Ho! every one that thirsteth, "come ye to the waters."

I rejoice; I tremble; but I will not be afraid. "The Lord is my strength and "my salvation; whom then shall I fear?" May I, and all that receive this honour from Christ, be clothed with righteousness! May the word spoken by His minister be never spoken in vain! May all who hear have grace to profit by the same, as

the means of salvation; and may He grant that, in all our words and deeds, both minister and people may seek the glory of God, and the increase of His kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

PRAYER.

O MOST GRACIOUS GOD AND FATHER, I adore and bless Thee for bringing me to this high dignity. Teach me devoutly to call to mind thy mercies in Christ Jesus, and my vows of obedience on each returning commemoration of this so great event of my life. Lord, if I live, may I live unto the Lord; and whensoever I am called to my account, may I find mercy in the blood of the Lamb, who with Thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, one God, world without end.

Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in Thee, we may glorify thy holy Name, and finally by thy mercy obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord: and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst us, and remain with us always. *Amen.*

THE END.

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